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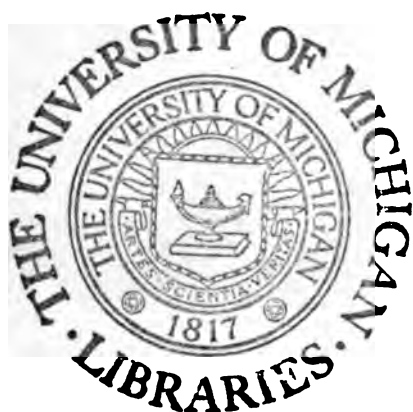
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THE  
DIVINA COMMEDIA

OF

*DANTE ALIGHIERI:*

CONSISTING OF THE

INFERNO—PURGATORIO—AND PARADISO.

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TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE,  
WITH PRELIMINARY ESSAYS, NOTES, AND ILLUSTRATIONS,

By the Rev. HENRY BOYD, A.M.

CHAPLAIN TO THE  
RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD VISCOUNT CHARLEVILLE.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE  
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VOL. III.

B



PRELIMINARY ESSAY

TO THE

PARADISO OF DANTE.

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IN this Essay I shall confine myself to the illustration of an opinion, which often occurs in this part of DANTE's Poem; not taken up at random by him, but probably learned from the Writings of Saint AUGUSTINE, with which he was very conversant; as, if necessary, could be proved from various parts of his Work. At least, if he did not learn this notion there, he, like many other Writers, inferred it from some strong expressions in his Works. The opinion which I mean is, the idea of *seeing* all things in God; a notion, which, in the end of the seventeenth century, had been rendered so celebrated by MALEBRANCHE.

When AUGUSTINE uses such strong expressions as these: *Illuminandi sumus—Lumen non sumus* \*.—*Vis nosce quid est?—Tenebræ: decente te magistro intimo in schola pectoris* †, &c. And, though in other parts of

\* Sermo de Verbis Apostolorum. † Confessiones, lib. ix. c. 9.

his Works, he speaks in very high strains of God's being the Light of our Minds, of our being illuminated immediately by the rays of the Divine Light; yet he seems to apply these expressions merely to our illumination in moral and divine things, and not to the perception of objects by the Senses.

This opinion seems to be founded on the *immutable ideas* of PLATO; which, according to him, are ever present with the Divine Mind, and the exemplars or patterns by which all things were made. The latter Platonists differed from their Founder in this, that they made the eternal ideas not to be distinct from the Deity, but to be in the Divine intellect as the objects of those conceptions which the Divine Mind must always have had, not only of every thing which he has made, but of every possible existence, and of all the relations of things; and they added, that, "by a proper purification and abstraction from the objects of sense, we may be, in some measure, united to the Deity, and in the eternal Light be enabled to discern the most sublime intellectual truths."

Whatever might be the case with AUGUSTINE, probably some of the other Doctors of the Church might have received a tincture\* of this opinion through the ALEXANDRIAN school, and communicated it to the MYSTICS of modern ages; among whom DANTE, as well as FENELON, may be reckoned; though, in the time of the TUSCAN Bard, they had not, as far as I

\* See REID on the Intellectual Powers of Man, vol. i. p. 137. Dublin edit.

know,

know, obtained that name. MALEBRANCHE, to the former theory, is supposed to have first made this addition, that we perceive even the objects of sense in the ideas of the Deity. But something of a similar kind occurs so often in the PARADISO OF DANTE, that this opinion must be referred to a more ancient origin. The introduction, indeed, of this idea is so frequent, that it was deemed necessary to premise something of this once celebrated opinion by way of illustration. The premises on which this theory is founded, may, perhaps, admit of dispute; but it is so captivating to the fancy, that a Poet may easily obtain pardon for having adopted a system, which formerly was defended by the gravest Philosophers, and in which, among other things, Dr. REID observes, "that the arguments of Bishop BERKELEY are to be found in their full force."

MALEBRANCHE, whose remarkable coincidence with our Author, has obliged us to give some account of his system, was a man whose penetrating genius led him to enter into a more minute investigation of the powers of the human Mind, than any one before him. He lays it down as a principle admitted by all Philosophers, and which could not be called in question, that we do not perceive external objects immediately, but by means of IMAGES, or IDEAS of them present to the Mind. "I suppose," says he, "that every one will grant, that we perceive not the objects that are without us immediately, and of themselves. We see the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, and an infinity of objects *without* us: and it is not at all likely, that the Soul falls out of the Body, and, as it were, takes a walk

through Heaven, to contemplate all these objects : she sees them not therefore by themselves ; and the immediate object of the Mind, for example, when it sees the Sun, is not the Sun, but something that is intimately united with the Soul ; and it is that which I call an *IDEA*. So that, by the word *IDEA* here, I understand nothing else but what is the immediate object, or nearest to the Mind, when we perceive any object. It ought to be carefully attended to, that, in order to the Mind perceiving any object, it is absolutely necessary that the idea of that object *be actually present with it*. Of this it is not possible to doubt. The things which the Soul perceives, are of two kinds ; they are either *in* the Soul, or they are *without* the Soul. Those that are within the Soul, are its own thoughts ; that is to say, all its different modifications ; the Soul has no need of ideas for perceiving these things : but with regard to things without the Soul, we cannot perceive them but by means of ideas \*."

Having laid this foundation, as a principle common to all Philosophers, and which admits of no doubt, he proceeds to enumerate all the possible ways by which the ideas of sensible objects may be presented to the Mind : Either, 1st, They come from the Bodies which we perceive ; or, 2dly, The Soul has the power of producing them in itself ; or, 3dly, They are produced by the Deity, either in our creation, or occasionally as there is use for them ; or, 4thly, The Soul has, in itself, virtually and eminently, as the Schoolmen say,

\* Recherche de la Verité, ii<sup>e</sup> partie, chap. 1. de la Nature des Idées.

all the perfections which it perceives in Bodies ; or, 5thly, The Soul is united with a Being possessed of all perfection, who has in himself the ideas of all created things. This he takes to be a complete enumeration of all the possible ways by which the ideas of external objects can be presented to the Mind. He employs a whole chapter upon each, refuting the four first \*, and confirming the last †, by various arguments, of which it will be necessary to give some account.

Supposing the possibility of our seeing all things in God ; partly, because God has in himself the ideas of all things which he has created ; and partly, because he is intimately united to our Souls by his presence : if thus, the works of God *may* be seen in God, if it pleases him to discover to the Mind, united to him, *that* in himself, which represents these things, M. MALEBRANCHE endeavours to prove that he *will* do so, rather than create continually a number of *new* ideas in every Mind.

1st, This appears probable from the simplicity of the divine operation. It appears not only from Reason, but the whole œconomy of Nature, that God never does that by very difficult ways, which may be done by methods that are simple and easy. He does nothing in vain, and without Reason. That which characterizes his Wisdom and his Power, is not to do *little* things by great means. This would be irrational, and the character of a limited intelligence ; but, on

\* Recherche de la Verité, ii<sup>de</sup> partie, chap. 2, 3, 4, 5.

† Ibid. chap. 6.

the contrary, the general character of his operations is, to do great things by simple and easy means. It is thus, that by extension alone he produces whatever we see admirable in Nature, and even that which gives life and motion to animals \*. As for those who will needs have *substantial forms*, &c. in animals, different from their blood and the organs of their body, in order to the performance of their functions, they do, in effect, suppose God to be defective in his understanding, or that he is not able to effect these admirable things by extension only : they measure the power of God, and his sovereign wisdom, by the minuteness of their own intellect. Since, therefore, God may produce in our Minds ideas of all things, merely by willing that they should see what is in the midst of themselves ; that is, *the ideas* in him that have a relation to those things, and which represent them ; there is no reason to suppose that he should do it otherwise, or that for such a purpose he should produce as many *infinities* of *infinite* ideas, as there are created Men : or more briefly thus,—God acts by the most simple means possible ; and therefore, since to make us understand by exhibiting to our Minds his own ideas is possible in itself, and also a much more simple way than to create ideas on purpose for that end, it is in all reason to be presumed, that we understand in *that* way, rather than in the *other*.

The next argument offered by this Writer to render it probable that we see things, because God wills

\* This Idea of the Mechanism of Animals he borrowed from DES CARTES. It is mentioned very gravely by NORRIS, in his Idea of the Intelligible World, part ii. chap. 2.

that



that the ideas that are in *him*, and that represent *them*, should be discovered to us ; and not because we have as many ideas created in us as are necessary to represent things to us ; *is*, because this places created Spirits in a more entire dependence upon God : for, upon this supposition, we see nothing but what he is willing we should see ; we can see nothing, therefore, but what God himself makes us see. To this purpose he quotes the expression of Saint PAUL (2 Cor. iii. 5.), *That we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.* It is God himself who enlightens Philosophers in that knowledge which ungrateful Man calls *natural* ; for *God has shewed it unto them.*—He is the *true Light which lighteneth every Man that cometh into the World* ; that he is not only the Light *efficiently*, by causing light in us, but *objectively* ; *i. e.* He himself is the immediate object of our Minds, by those ideas or reasons of things that are contained in him. He is not only called the Light, but the Truth also, apparently with a view to confirm this doctrine.

In his next argument he expatiates upon our manner of seeing things : He says, “ We find, by experience, that when we want to fix our Mind upon any particular object, we first cast our view on all beings, and afterwards apply ourselves to the consideration of that object which we propose to think on. And as we thus can range round all beings, and desire to see sometimes one, and sometimes another, it is certain,” he thinks, “ that all beings are present to our minds ; but that cannot be any otherwise than as God is present  
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sent to them, who in the simplicity of his being contains all beings."

But what is more to his purpose, he remarks, under this head, "that the Mind, in all probability, would not be able to represent to itself the universal ideas of kinds and species, unless it saw all beings included in ONE; for every creature being a particular existence, we cannot say that we see any thing *created*, when we see, for instance, the abstract idea of a triangle: and he thinks, that we cannot well give an account how the Mind comes to know several abstract and general truths, unless it be by the presence of HIM who can enlighten the Mind by an infinite variety of ways."

He continues to observe, that the most sublime and solid proof of the existence of the Deity, or that which *supposes* the fewest of all things, is the idea which we have of *infinite*. It is plain, that the Mind does perceive *infinite*, though it does not comprehend it; and that it has a very distinct idea of God, which it could not have but by the union which it has with him; for it is not to be conceived, that the idea of a being infinitely perfect, such as we have of God, should be *created*; that is, he deems it impossible that any thing but God himself, any *idea* of him, should represent him to our Minds: in other words, he asserts, that he himself is the immediate object of the Mind, when he exhibits such evidences and views of himself; and if he himself be the immediate object of our Mind, the divine ideas must be so too; and thus we perceive things in God, *viz.* by those ideas of *his* that represent *them*.

He

He offers, afterwards, some arguments by way of illustration ; the first of which is, the universality of that Reason whereof Man is partaker : “ It is agreed,” says he, “ that all Men are capable of knowing truth; and even the most enlightened among the Philosophers agree that Man partakes of a certain Reason ; therefore it is that they define him to be an animal partaking of Reason. But there is nobody but knows, at least confusedly, that the essential difference of Man consists in his necessary union with *universal Reason*. What includes this *Reason* no one knows, nor seems much concerned to discover. I see certain Truths that all may see as well as myself ; I do not see them in the Mind of any Man, nor any Man in mine : there must, therefore, be an *universal Reason* that enlightens me, and all other intelligent Beings ; for, if the Reason that I consult were not the same that answers to the Chinese, it is evident that I could not be so certain as I am, that the Chinese did see the same Truths that I see. There is, therefore, a sovereign and universal Reason that all Men consult whenever they enter into themselves ; on which occasion he cites a passage from Saint AUGUSTINE : “ If we both see that it is true what you say, and *both* see that it is true what I say, *where* is it that we see it ? not I in you, nor you in me, but both in that *immutable Truth* which is superior to our Minds \*.”

He argues again from the necessity and immutability of that REASON which we consult : “ It is certain

\* Eclaircissement sur la nature des Idées, tom. ii. p. 426. Ed. Amst. 1688.

that

that the ideas of things are immutable, and that eternal Truths and Laws are necessary. It is impossible that they should not be such as they ARE; but I see nothing in myself that is immutable or necessary. I might not be, or not be what I am. It is possible there may be Spirits too which are not at all like me; and yet I am well assured there cannot be Spirits that see other Truths, or other Laws, than those which I see. Every Spirit must needs see that two and two make four; and that one's Friend is to be preferred before one's Dog: therefore it is necessary to conclude that the Reason which all Men consult, is a necessary and immutable Reason."

He draws his next argument from the Infinitude of the same Reason: the Mind of Man clearly perceives that there are, or may be, an infinitude of intelligible Triangles, Tetragons, Pentagons, and others of the like figures. It does not only conceive that the ideas of figures will never be wanting to it, and that it will always discover new ones, though it should eternally apply itself to that sort of ideas only; but it also perceives infinitude in extension. The Mind sees clearly that the number which multiplied produces five, or any of the numbers between four and nine, between nine and sixteen, between sixteen and twenty-five, is a quantity in relation, a fraction whose terms contain more figures than can be made from one pole of the world to the other: it sees clearly that it is a relation such as God only can comprehend; and that it is impossible to express it exactly, because to express it exactly requires a fraction whose two terms are infinite. Many  
such

such examples might be assigned ; from whence it may be concluded, not only that the Mind of Man is limited, but that the Reason which he consults is infinite ; for, in fine, the Mind clearly sees Infinitude in his Reason, though it does not comprehend it. Since it can compare incommensurable numbers with one another, and perceive, though it cannot compare, them with unity, or to consider only what, it is plain that the Reason which Man consults is infinite, since we cannot exhaust it, and it has always something to answer on whatever demand.

“ But if it be true, that the Reason, of which all Men participate, is universal, infinite, immutable, and necessary, it cannot be different from that of God himself ; for nothing but an infinite can comprehend an infinite Reason. All particular Beings are created ; universal Reason must be uncreated.” To this he adds, “ It is not only infinite and immutable, but it is necessary and independent ; for God cannot act but according to this universal immutable Reason \*. In some sense he is himself *dependent* upon it ; as under its guidance all his operations are conducted : but God only consults himself ; he depends upon nothing else : therefore this reason is *his* reason, co-eternal and unsubstantial ; in short, it can scarcely, even in idea, be distinguished from himself. We know that God *cannot* punish an innocent person ; that he *cannot* subject Spirit to Body ; that he is *obliged* (as we may say) to follow order. We see, therefore, the very rule by which he acts.

\* See Clarke's Sermon on God's omnipotence.

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That Wisdom we contemplate in the eternal rule of Right, is the Wisdom of God himself; nor can we conceive any thing else that deserves the name of true Wisdom. SOLOMON himself has assured us that the Wisdom which is co-eternal with God, by which he has established that order which we see in his Works, is the same with that which presides over all Spirits, the same which Legislators consult in order to make just and reasonable Laws \*. The Scripture, indeed, speaks of another Wisdom, which it calls the Wisdom of this World; but it expressly asserts, that when the latter comes in competition with the former, it comes under the denomination of Folly.

“ In short, if that Reason which we consult were not necessary, universal, immutable, and independent, we could not possibly have any real science. If it were not necessary that twice four was equal to eight, or that the three angles of a triangle were not equal to two right ones; what proofs would we have that these Truths were not like those opinions which have their day in certain Universities, and then drop into oblivion? Would we in that case perceive clearly that God could not cease to will as he has willed, if his will was free, *i. e.* detached from right Reason? or would we see that God has not willed certain things for one certain time, for one certain place, for certain persons, or for certain orders of being, as would be the case if he were entirely free, and indifferent whether he acted according to the rules of right Reason or

\* Proverbs, c. viii.

not? Indifference and the eternal fitness of things are incompatible together.

“Some may say that these Laws of right Reason and fitness are so ordered by the decrees of God; but where do they find this decree? It must either be seen in God, or in their own Minds. Do they find it in any modification of their own Minds? if not, they must see it in God.

“One sees at the first glance that the nature of numbers and all intelligible ideas is immutable, necessary, and independent; twice four must necessarily be eight, and the square of the diagonal must be double to the square: this can by no means be supposed to depend upon a decree. The Truths contemplated in the Wisdom of God are eternal; the Soul was made to contemplate them. It is here that order is seen which he has fitted us to follow.

“If we were bound to particular ideas alone, and could form no conception of Infinitude, our liberty of thinking would evidently be very much abridged, nor could we fix our affections on any but particular things; we could love nothing but what we saw; an infinite Being we never could love, for we could form no idea of such a Being.”

But besides, if these Laws were not in their nature immutable and necessary, the clearest and strongest proofs of our Religion would be destroyed in their first principles; no less than freedom of thinking, and those sciences which depend upon axioms. It is plain that the Christian Religion, which proposes a Mediator and a Sanctifier, founds its promises upon  
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the idea of original transgression, and the corruption of our nature. But where is the proof of this corruption? "the Flesh contends against the Spirit," you will say, "and brings it into subjection." This is true, but this is no disorder; the Libertine will assert, "it is according to the decrees of God, who has made things as they are. Now, under this supposition, how will we prove that it is a breach of order that the Flesh should overcome the Spirit, or the dictates of Reason, if there are no immutable dictates of Reason, no eternal fitness, independent of any decrees. If this order depended upon arbitrary decrees, the next moment might give birth to new promulgation, and we would always have to enquire what Laws we ought to obey.

"If this were an order which the Deity, by the attributes of his nature, cannot infringe, (for he cannot will disorder,) an order of which all Mankind have a consentaneous idea, all the former consequences follow: if the contrary be supposed, and that all depends upon arbitrary will and power, I can see nothing but an universal confusion that can be the consequence.

"Poets and Philosophers have been found who have asserted, that we can find no difference between just and unjust actions, and that we ought not to blush for deeds that the generality of Mankind have marked with infamy. No answer can be given to them, but on the principles of immutable order, and the Laws which eternal Reason has laid down for our deportment in all circumstances.



“ The Almighty himself has appealed to the common sense of mankind ; to that law, to which the Pagans themselves were conscious that they were subjected, when he calls upon all mankind to judge between him and his people \* ; or, in other words, when he appeals to the necessary and immutable laws of Justice. If we consider the murder of AGRIPPINA by her Son by any other rules, it might be asked, in what he offended ? He followed the natural movement of his hatred. God had laid *him* under no restrictions. What was the law of the Jews to him, you will say ; he had the law of Nature to refer to.—Doubtless—and what is this law, but an invincible proof of an established order of things, to which the Mind of every man has access, and of which the degrees of conviction mark the difference of the rational and irrational Man, who attends to the dictates of Universal Reason, or obeys the calls of Passion ? The closer a man unites himself by meditation, and the power given him of forming abstract ideas, to the *Universal Reason*, the less danger he will incur of being led astray by his animal propensities.

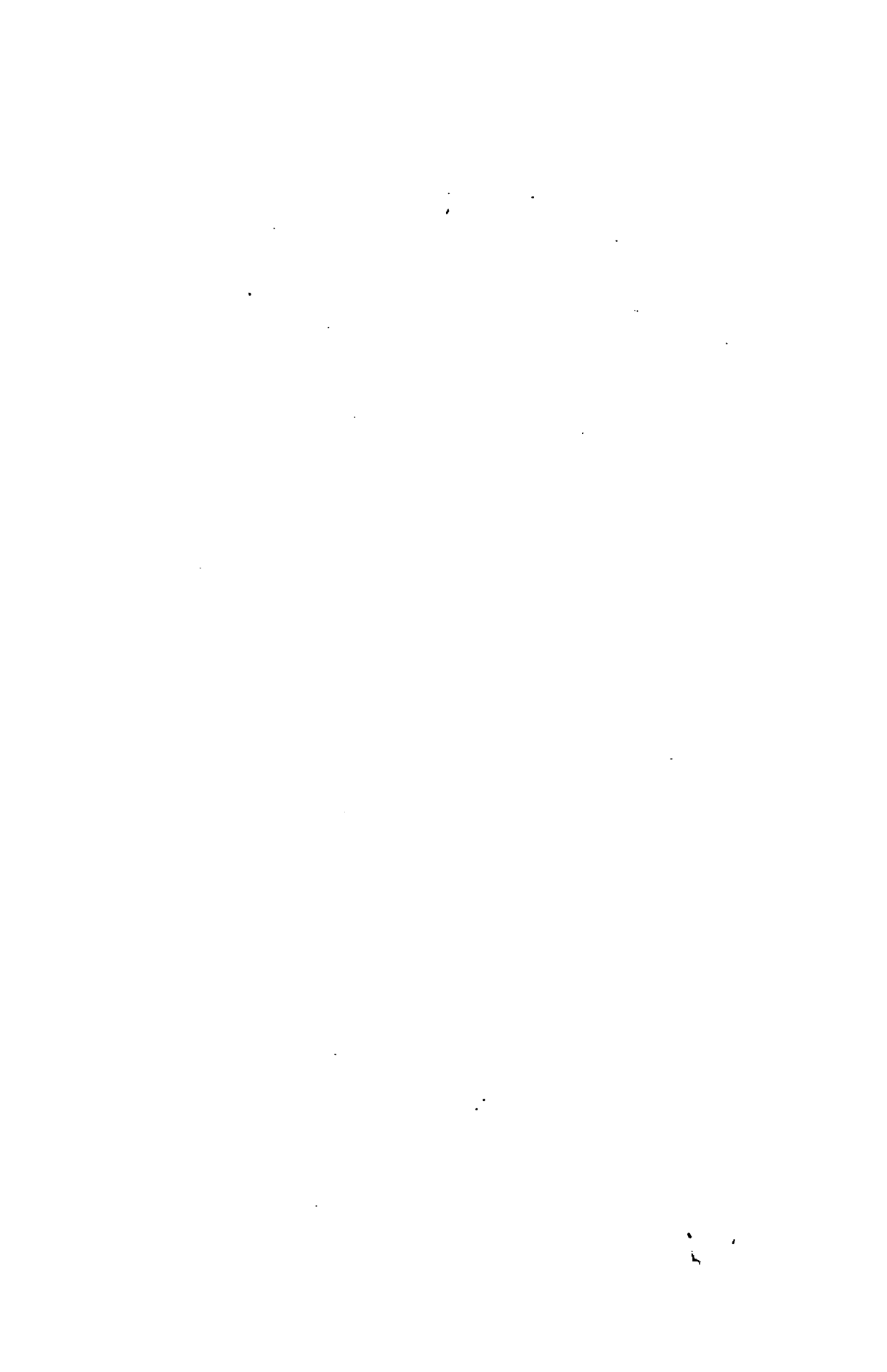
“ In a simple being like God, it is not easy to conceive this wonderful variety of ideas, the prototypes of all things which he has made ; but when we consider that this infinite variety implies infinite order, it will render the conception less difficult. The idea of a watch, that, besides its ordinary mechanism, exhibits the revolutions of the planets, must be held in higher

\* Isaiah, iii. 3.

estimation than one of the common registers of Time ; if we pursue this idea, we will perceive the reason why the Deity should place a greater value upon created Intelligences, than inanimate matter, however curiously arranged. Eternal truth results from this order, and from the relations they bear to each other in the Divine comprehension, to which we must have recourse in order to know them. As God must love himself, on account of his transcendent, rational, and moral perfection, his love must be expanded on all that resemble him, in proportion to the degrees of that similitude. Something analogous to this we can perceive, when, liberated from the dominion of the Passions, we enter into the sublime task of self-contemplation. This immediately unites us to the Divinity, and in him we see that display of light and order which irradiates our understanding, and inflames our affections."

Towards the conclusion he mentions an exception to the rule he had laid down, that created Intelligences are held by the Deity in higher estimation than inanimate matter. " This," he says, " cannot be the case with depraved Souls ; for the law is inviolable, that God cannot love what is so unlike himself as a corrupted Mind must be ; and that he has even more regard for their organized bodies, than he can have for them." " Why then," it may be asked, " are they still preserved in being ?" He answers, " By the mediation and intercession of JESUS CHRIST, who still interests himself so far for them, as to procure them leisure for repentance, if they will attend to the calls of  
the

the Holy Spirit : without him they would be annihilated, and by his Judgment they will be finally consigned to eternal punishment, if they continue to withstand the constant applications of divine Grace."



# EXTRACT

FROM THE

## SYMPOSIUM OF PLATO.

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**SPEECH** *attributed to SOCRATES, on the Means of acquiring  
the Love of GOD, or the FIRST GOOD.*

**SOCRATES** having given a mythological account of the birth of LOVE, which he says he had learned from **DIOTIMA**, a Prophetess, proceeds to recite his dialogue with her. After several discussions of the nature and attributes of this Passion, **DIOTIMA** proceeds to describe its nature at full length, nearly in the following words :

“ Do you suppose that Men love any thing but *apparent* good?” is the question she addresses to **SOCRATES**. To this he gives his assent.

“ **DIO**. We therefore may simply affirm, that good is the object of human Love.

**Soc**. Certainly.

**DIO**. Are we not to add, that communion with the object of his wishes is essential to this desire?

Soc. This addition is necessary.

Dio. And that this communion should be perpetual ?

Soc. Doubtless.

Dio. LOVE, therefore, on a comprehensive view of the subject, appears to be a desire of some inseparable good ?

Soc. You are perfectly right.

Dio. These, therefore, being the general attributes of Love, can you define the reasons why it pursues its object, or its mode of operation, and by what exertion or propensity it attains the name of Love ?

Soc. If I could have satisfied myself on this subject, my admiration of your wisdom never would have carried me so far to consult you.

Dio. I will therefore explain this subject to you : In the first place, know that there is a propagation of the Mind inspired by Beauty, as well as of the Body.

Soc. I certainly would require something like inspiration to understand you, for here I am quite in the dark.

Dio. You shall soon understand my meaning. Both the Body and Mind of man are endowed by Nature with powers to propagate their likenesses. When we come to a certain age, the genial propensity makes its appearance ; but Beauty, real or imaginary, is necessary to bring it to effect. The result of animal Love is a corporeal progeny : This, however, is the operation of superior power, the effect of celestial energy in a material subject. In a disproportioned and incongruous object this cannot be effected. What is deformed or discordant, cannot be the instrument of this Divine energy ; for  
Beauty

Beauty can only concord with Divinity. Beauty, therefore, is the prime cause, and presiding Goddess even of this lower species of generation. When, therefore, this genial propensity meets with an object with which it sympathizes, this is the consequence; a contrary effect ensues, when the object inspires antipathy. To be precluded from this privilege, is contrary to Nature; nor is it so much the love of progeny, as a desire of prolonging our being to other generations; or, as we may say, an instinctive longing after immortality: for (what was observed before) it appears, that Love wishes a constant enjoyment of the object of its desire; therefore it must desire immortality, as the medium of fruition. Hence it appears that a species of immortality is the object even of this inferior Passion. —What do you imagine, O SOCRATES! to be the cause of this intense desire? Do you not perceive the violence of this Passion even arising to a pitch of fury, in all animals of Earth, Sea, and Air? What labour they undertake for the preservation of their young? The weakest and most pusillanimous creatures will not dread to assault the most ferocious and robust in defence of their offspring. For them they encounter famine, and death itself; nor is there any living thing, however formidable at other times, which they would scruple to engage, to procure support, or to afford protection, to their defenceless brood. Man, you will suppose impelled to this by the exercise of his reasoning powers; but what gives this impulse to animals? Can you assign a cause?

Soc. I cannot.

DIO. And can you suppose yourself an adept in the mysteries of Love, while you remain ignorant of this ?

SOC. For this reason, O DIOTIMA ! I applied to you, as I said before, because I know my need of instruction. Tell me, therefore, I request you, the cause of this, and solve any other difficulties which may occur on this subject.

DIO. That every species of Love shows a desire of immortality is plain ; the gross material Passion can attain this by no other mode than substituting a rising generation for that which is going off the stage ; for in the life of every animal, even while it continues apparently in its utmost vigour, there is nothing constant, every particle of the body undergoes a momentary change ; the skin, the flesh, the blood, the bones, the hair, and, in fact, the whole corporeal system. This not only is the case with the Body, but the Mind also is subject to the inroads of mutability ; manners, habitudes, opinions, propensities, pleasures, joys, and fears, all are in a state of incessant transformation ; nor can any of them be called precisely the same for an instant ; there is always a new succession and dereliction of parts. What is still more wonderful, sciences themselves, in us, are in a constant flux ; opinions vanish from our minds, and others arise in their stead, or the old ones are renewed and preserved by frequent meditation and recollection. Thus, O SOCRATES ! a species of immortality is secured to the Body, and every thing in its own nature mortal ; while to the Mind, its immortality is secured in another manner. If you had considered that appetite for glory so common among men, you would not  
have



have been so much at a loss on this subject. You see with what ardent exertions they strive to attract general notice, and secure a title to immortal glory! For this they expose themselves to greater labour, and more imminent danger, than any regard to their offspring could inspire; for this they undergo the heaviest expences, nor are they afraid, for this, to encounter death itself. Do you imagine that *ALCESTIS* would have died for her Husband, *ACHILLES* for his Friend, or *CODRUS* for his Country, had they not deemed themselves secure of immortality as a reward?

Soc. Certainly not. I am rather convinced that this desire of future fame is the general motive to great actions, and that higher degrees of virtue only inflame this propensity the more in generous bosoms. Immortality is the object of their Passion, as Beauty is of the mere corporeal instinct; nor is the animal impulse to perpetuate the mere corporeal likeness, stronger in those who are subject to its dominion, than in those who are endowed with the generous passion to propagate the noble conceptions of the Mind, and those virtues which are its distinguished and natural progeny. Poets, in this respect, may be called Parents; also all Inventors of useful Arts. But the noblest offspring of all, is that Prudence which is employed in rendering a State happy, and of which Justice and Temperance are the principal ingredients.—Pregnant with these celestial conceptions, the Mind seeks instinctively a social Mind, for the pleasure of communication, and is delighted when it meets with a proper subject with whom it can expatiate upon the nature, and indulge in the praise, of Virtue. In the  
com.

communion of such Minds a progeny truly immortal comes to light, a progeny far dearer than the children who bear our name, and inherit our fortunes. When we contemplate, for instance, the progeny of HOMER and HESIOD; what children LYCURGUS bequeathed to GREECE; how the inheritance of his immortal Spirit rendered them the Saviours of their country; who would not prefer such an offspring to all others? Why need I mention SOLON and other Legislators, GREEKS as well as Barbarians; you see how they are honoured on account of a posterity so renowned. You see how many Temples have been dedicated to the Parents of such Children; but who ever heard of a Temple dedicated to a Man merely for having a Child in the common course of Nature? You yourself, O SOCRATES! may be initiated into the mystery of producing such an offspring, and I will assist you with all my power.—The person who wishes to acquire this divine Passion, ought to raise his Mind to it by degrees, and begin by the contemplation of Beauty in a single object. Of this he ought gradually to acquire an abstracted view, by considering its similarity with beauty in another object. If thus he gets an idea of this attractive quality, he will find it absurd to suppose, that it is different from itself, but that it must be the *same* however extended, and by whatever numbers it is participated. This will lead him by easy steps to contemplate the Beauty of the Mind; and, if he find a person endowed with this truly ætherial charm, although deficient in external attractions, to that Mind it is his duty to apply, to develope its latent graces, to excite

its energies, and to conceive at the same time, and communicate, the Love of Virtue. Hence his sphere of intellectual vision will by degrees be enlarged, so as to comprehend the beauty of legislative systems, and to take in the whole glorious circumference of moral duty, and perceive how amiable it is in all its relations and connections. Such objects as these will soon render mere corporeal Beauty contemptible in comparison. When he proceeds thence to contemplate the Sciences, a scene of superlative grandeur will open to his view; no single object will be deemed worthy his attention. He will not only see, but feel, how degrading such pursuits are to a Mind capable of such amazing expansion. Lost in the contemplation of Beauty, as in a boundless ocean, he will then be able to contemplate the wonderful fabric of Philosophy in all its proportions, various in its relations, but uniform in its tendency. He that has found his way hitherto, and can mount to this stage through the different gradations of Love, exalted from an earthly passion to a divine affection, will now find an object worthy of his utmost ardour, a source of ineffable transport, which will repay all his labours; for on this account they were all undergone.

“ The great uncreated *self-existent Being*, who not like other beings a mixture of perfection and defect, unites in himself all perfections; he that sees him, does not see as here below, a fading image of moral excellence, but VIRTUE itself in a visible form: from such an union new virtues will always take their birth, the  
immortal

immortal offspring of a Soul exalted as far as Humanity can soar, and the Universal Parent will look with complacence at the view of a Mortal putting on Immortality."

THE  
PARADISO  
OF  
DANTE ALIGHIERI.



## CANTO THE FIRST.

### ARGUMENT.

The Poet describes his Ascent\* to the First Heaven, or the Region of the Moon, under the Guidance of BEATRICE.— Their first Conference.

HIS Glory, who, with solitary hand,  
Launches thro' boundless space the stellar Band,  
And shines effulgent, or involves his Throne  
In darkness, as he wills, in daring strains  
I sing, admitted to the lofty fanes,  
Fill'd with the Glory of th' ETERNAL ONE.

### II.

There saw I things beyond Creation's bourne,  
Which none who from her flaming bounds return  
Can tell, when soaring Thought is launch'd so far  
In Being's vast Abyfs, that Mem'ry fails,  
Nor dares pursue, altho' with crowded fails  
She tries the Voyage o'er th' eternal Bar.

### III.

But some small remnant of that heav'nly Spoil,  
From that strange Voyage won with arduous toil,

\* The Ptolemaic System is here followed, which makes the Earth the Centre of the System.

To her dear native soil, the Muse shall bear ;  
 If the blest'd Pow'r of Inspiration deign  
 To breathe his Spirit thro' my latest strain,  
 And make it worthy of the wreath I wear.

IV.

One steepy Hill of HELICON to climb,  
 Sufficient seem'd to me ; but circling Time  
 Has led my footsteps to the bolder brow,  
 That nearer leans upon the lofty Sky.  
 O ! to my panting heart that strain supply,  
 Which made my Rival rue his hardy vow.

V.

Would'st thou bestow an energy to last,  
 Till I could sketch the heav'nly scene in haste  
 (Tho' but in shadows) on the dim expanse  
 That fleets beneath the Moon before it fade !  
 I see, I see the mystic tints display'd,  
 And Fancy eyes the scene with eager glance !

VI.

Then would'st thou see me to thy hallow'd bough  
 Approach, and cull a garland for my brow,  
 Worthy the Poet, and the Poet's God?—  
 Seldom (O, hide your heads in endless shame,  
 Monarchs and Bards !) the genuine wreath of Fame  
 Is on a Minstrel, or a King, bestow'd !

*St. vi. l. 4. Seldom, &c.] Conquerors, who, for frivolous pretences,  
 laid the World in blood ; and Poets, who have made Injustice or  
 Vice the subject of their Panegyric ; or, at least, have palliated  
 their deformity.*



VII.

OLYMPUS triumphs, and the tuneful lyre  
Is wak'd to rapture, when the hallow'd fire  
Lights on the gifted Bard, and fires his Soul  
With love of genuine Fame; a sacred thirst,  
By Visions pure and Contemplation nurs'd,  
Whose heav'nly Pageants thro' his Fancy roll.

VIII.

The Wood that waves upon the Mountain's Brow  
A spark may fire; my smother'd embers glow  
With languid heat; and yet may wake a flame,  
Whose waving Spires may Earth and Heav'n adorn,  
And fervours new bestow on Tribes unborn,  
Lesson'd to Glory by my humbler Name.

IX.

My rustic pipe may wake a nobler sound,  
Than Echo e'er return'd from CYRRHA's bound;

*St. viii.]* Never was prediction more completely fulfilled by the imitations of our Bard, to which succeeding ages were witness. In this respect, he may almost be called the *Father* of modern Poetry; the instances would fill an additional volume. Our own CHAUCER, SPENSER, and MILTON, were particularly indebted to him, as all who are conversant with their Works can testify.

*St. ix, x.]* The Poet is still supposed to be in the terrestrial Paradise with BEATRICE. MILTON's lines, where he introduces Satan in the same scene with our Poet, are somewhat like these:

—He look'd

Sometimes tow'rd Heav'n, and the full blazing Sun,  
Which now sat high in his meridian Tower.

*Book iv. initio.*

If such a theme as mine their breasts inspire,  
CLIO, begin!—The light that seems to veer  
To diff'rent stations, with the circling year,  
In ARIES flam'd with new collected fire.

X.

Where, cross the midmost Zone, the Chariot bright  
Of PHOEBUS draws transverse a line of Light,  
With burning wheels alike from either goal  
Distant, where Ocean meets the bending Sky;  
He look'd abroad with glory in his eye,  
Darting his smiles afar to either Pole.

XI.

His longer journey in a gentle sign  
He now began, with energy divine,  
Inspiring vigour thro' the torpid frame  
Of this dull beamless Orb. His rising Light  
Smil'd in that clime, while EUROPE, cloth'd in Night,  
Deplor'd the absence of his genial flame.

XII.

Sudden, I saw the holy Vestal turn,  
And, with a longing eye that seem'd to burn,  
Fixing her keen glance on the solar Car;  
No Eagle, soaring thro' the Concave blue,  
Ere sent so steadfast and confirm'd a view  
On the bright face of the diurnal Star.

XIII.

And, as the slanting beams reflected rise  
From the clear Mirror to the vaulted Skies,

So caught from her the fervour glanc'd on me,  
And all my Fancy fir'd ; my vifual ray  
Now feem'd to meet the glorious fource of Day,  
From tranfient fhade or human weaknefs free.

XIV.

Nature herfelf in that high-favour'd Zone  
Her functions fills with vigour all her own ;  
Our frailer Senfes here would ftart to find  
What miracles in that diftinguifh'd fpot  
She works, where ADAM found his favour'd lot  
Happy, 'till Hell againft his peace combin'd.

XV.

This tide of glory long I had not borne,  
Till a new kindling Sun a fecond Morn  
Seem'd to difpenfe ; while fcintillating round  
Its redd'ning splendours fir'd the Concave blue,  
BEATRICE ftill indulg'd her ftadfaft view  
Amid the fields of Æther kindling bright.

XVI.

As if fhe meant to watch in mufeful mood  
The mighty mundane wheel, abforpt fhe flood ;  
I watch'd her looks with unaverted eye,  
Still wond'ring, and ftill changing as I gaz'd ;  
Like GLAUCUS, by the magic herb amaz'd,  
When firft he long'd new elements to try.

*St. xvi. l. 5. Like GLAUCUS,]* Described by OVID, lib. xiv. as changed into a Fish, and leaping inftinctively into the Sea, on eating a certain herb. To this he compares his Transformation by Light, (or Grace,) and his fubfequent flight to the Moon.

XVII.

Immortal change, on EUNÖE's happy shore,  
To tell thy wond'rous nature, words are poor ;  
They only know, who wing the fiery Zone  
To Glory's op'ning arms. Immortal Love,  
That lead'ft the triumphs of the Blest above,  
Say, was I thine entire, or still mine own ?

XVIII.

Thou know'ft ; for now, poffeffing all my pow'rs,  
My Voyage to the Stars with ftady courfe  
Thou steer'dft ; nor did I know th' aftounding flight  
I took, 'till, echoing from the blue profound,  
That deep Song, which the Orbs revolving round  
Obey, my Senses steep'd in ftange delight.

XIX.

Not long I liften'd to the viewlefs Choir,  
When o'er Heav'n's cope a lake of lambent fire

*St. xvii. l. 1. —on EUNÖE's happy ftore,]* See PURGATORIO,  
Canto xxxiii. laft Note.

*St. xviii, xix.]* The Pythagorean notion of the mufic of the  
Spheres, is here alluded to ; thus finely introduced in a late Publica-  
tion :

When, feated like an youthful Queen,  
With meaner Beauties circled round,  
'Midft heav'nly Choirs in ftate majestic feen,  
Thou com'ft, with light imperial crown'd,  
The Spirits, that with guiding hand,  
Planets roll and Stars command,  
Pour thy choral warblings wide, &c.

Ode to the Moon, by Mr. PRESTON. See his Poem,  
vol.ii. p.48. Dublin edit. ; and a Note on the paffage.  
See alfo COWLEY's Davideis, book i. line 34. Note.

Instant diffus'd its undulating flow ;  
 Meanwhile th' ÆOLIAN descant, loud and long,  
 Hymning the glorious dawn, my bosom stung,  
 With painful eagerness the cause to know.

XX.

My holy Guide, who what I felt beheld,  
 Clear in the Mirror of the Mind reveal'd,  
 To 'fwage my Soul's emotion as it grew,  
 Open'd her rosy lips, and thus began :  
 " False Forms deceive thy optics, Son of Man !  
 With shadowy objects which eclipse the TRUE :

XXI.

" You think yourself on Earth, a moving clod !  
 Ah !—not the red bolt from the arm of God,  
 That fires the forest, and to Heav'n returns ;  
 Tho' quick as thought it seems to pierce the gloom,  
 Thro' Æther wing'd its way with swifter plume !  
 See ! what a glorious prospect round you burns."

XXII.

What joys were mine ! my former doubts had pass'd  
 Like Morning clouds ; but others quickly cast  
 Their shadows o'er my Soul : " O Virgin say,"  
 I cry'd, " how could this cumbrous Body skim  
 Thro' air, and on the fiery deluge swim,  
 That seems below thro' shoreless space to play ?"

XXIII.

Instant, with placid look and pitying sigh,  
 On me the Vestal turn'd her angel eye,

As Mother on her Son, with looks benign,  
And gently thus began : “ All things that float  
In Being’s womb, by Order’s heav’nly note,  
Their motions tune, and range by Art divine.

XXIV.

“ Conform’d to Order’s ever-holy source,  
By his firm mandate, an unswerving course  
They keep, but reach the goal with various speed,  
From that prime habitude that erst impress’d,  
With diff’rent modes of slowness and of haste,  
Their first career, and each his place decreed.

XXV.

“ By instinct thus yon’ restless flames aspire,  
Even earthly Forms are warm’d with hallow’d fire ;  
Earth feeds its millions, and attracts its pow’r  
To fructify her mould. The heav’nly boon  
To all beneath, and all above the Moon,  
Is giv’n, tho’ join’d in some with Reason’s lore.

XXVI.

“ As boundless glory and transcendent joy  
Flow o’er the vast empyreal World on high ;  
Thus the wide circulation rolls below,  
On whose revolving wheel all Creatures move,  
Borne to their final goal by fatal Love,  
True as the winged arrow from the bow.

XXVII.

“ But as the rude materials oft withstand  
The fine impression of the Master’s hand ;

So, by the fatal bent of Passion led,  
The wicked Will a wayward motion takes ;  
Its heav'nly model and its type forsakes,  
Whose plastic pow'r its bias first obey'd.

XXVIII.

“ Nor wonder thou at thine aërial spring,  
So many leagues aloft ; the rapid wing  
Of Light'ning, feather'd with instinctive fire,  
To mount the welkin, with reverted stroke  
Darts from the zenith thro' the blasted Oak :  
Wonder not, then, if Earth to Heav'n aspire.

XXIX.

“ Say, would you wonder at a torrent's fall  
From some steep rock ? At Heav'n's immediate call,  
When pure Lustration's breeze has blown away  
The deep LETHEAN fume that wrapt your Soul ;  
Why should you linger thus beneath the Pole,  
Heav'n-born, heav'n-doom'd, an Heir of endless Day?

*St. xxvii. l. 4. The wicked WILL a wayward, &c.]* For the moral use, this *refistance* is supposed to be subservient, in promoting mental activity in rational Beings, see Preliminary Essay to the PURGATORIO, Sect. ii.

*St. xxviii. l. 1. Nor wonder thou,—] i. e.* If Fire descends to Earth with so much rapidity, contrary to its nature, do not be surprised at the ascent of *Earth* to Heaven. MOLOC, in MILTON, observes of ethereal Spirits on their Fall :

With what compulsion and laborious flight

We sunk thus low : th' ascent is easy then. Book ii.

But DANTE intends to point out how much the degeneracy of Man, made in the image of God, is against the design of his Nature.

XXX.

“ How would you wonder, if yon’ rapid fires  
Would sink and roll along their lambent spires,  
Or, like a limpid Lake, their Mirror spread?  
Such are the Souls that fix their hopes below,  
When meant to mount.” Then, with an angel’s glow,  
She rais’d her eye where Heav’n its pomp display’d.

END OF THE FIRST CANTO.



## CANTO THE SECOND.

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### ARGUMENT.

The Poet, having arrived in the Lunar World, enquires of BEATRICE the Reason of the Shadows that appear in the Body of the Moon.

---

O YE, that 'tend my course with vent'rous sail,  
Where my bold Vessel spooms before the gale,  
Lur'd by that melody, whose distant strains  
Smoothly conducts her gliding Bark along  
The shoreless Sea with inexpressive Song,  
Turn! while your native shore in sight remains!

### II.

If in this Sea, where never sail before  
Shadow'd the wave, you dip the bending oar,  
My track you soon may lose, and wander far:  
MINERVA gives the gale, APOLLO steers,  
The Maids of Pindus charm the list'ning Spheres,  
And point my eye-beam to the leading Star.

III.

But ye, selected few, that long to join  
The hymeneal Choirs of Love divine,  
And share the feast that Languor never knows,  
The coming breeze invites ; your sails expand,  
Launch boldly in the deep, and leave the land,  
In my long track, before the waters close.

IV.

To you those far-fam'd Voyagers of yore,  
Who stemm'd the wild waves to the Phasian shore,  
The palm of immortality must yield ;  
Tho' by their Chief the Dragon seed was sown,  
With more exalted hopes from Zone to Zone  
You sped, when Heav'n the glorious prize reveal'd.

V.

Fix'd on the Stars the Virgin kept her eye,  
And I on her, as thro' the ample Sky  
Swift as an arrow from the founding yew  
I wing'd my flight : but soon, disclosing wide,  
A wond'rous prospect drew mine eyes aside ;  
Soft smil'd the Maid, for all my thoughts she knew.

VI.

Soft as the rising Moon, an orient Light  
On her fine features shone serenely bright. [Sphere  
" Bless Heav'n," she cry'd, " that on the lunar  
Has landed you at last." While thus she spoke,  
It seem'd a shining Cloud around us broke,  
And o'er the welkin roll'd in billows clear.

VII.

From the broad surge reflex the solar ray  
Flash'd round, but far within the shafts of Day ;  
Th' ætherial lymph that form'd the subtle tide,  
With our dimensions mingling, as we pass'd,  
Our essence enter'd, and our limbs embrac'd,  
As thro' the limpid wave we seem'd to glide.

VIII.

How bodies in each other can be lost,  
And the same space by different Forms engross'd,  
Seem'd strange ; but these perplexing doubts are  
By FAITH, our fervent longing to inflame [giv'n  
For that blest'd union, when, with wond'rous claim,  
Man forms alliance with the FIRST in Heav'n.

IX.

Great Mystery of Heav'n ! we here beheld  
Thy wond'rous emblem in the floating field,  
Which made thee to my inward sense as bright  
As the first elements of Truth descry'd  
To the Mind's eye ; then, 'midst the lucid tide,  
I thus address'd the Denizen of Light :

X.

“ Such grateful sense as mortal Soul can show  
I feel for him, that from the World of Woe

*St. viii. l. 1. How bodies, &c.]* The Incarnation of the Son of God, emblematically represented (according to the Poet) by this incorporation of the lunar Light with their gross terrestrial bodies.

Wafted to this fair Star my wond'rous flight :  
But where are those deep Shades that mark her face,  
When she begins her long nocturnal race,  
Where CAIN is said to roam in endless Night?"

XI.

" No wonder Reason fail'd," the Guide rejoin'd,  
" When keenest Sense, the Harbinger of Mind,  
Her confines meets ; when, ev'n within her bound,  
Where she with Reason shares the whole domain,  
She with her Sisters labours on with pain,  
For ever baffled in her search profound."

XII.

" But what you think, you boldly may declare,"  
I quick return'd ; " its substance, dense or rare,  
Gives that appearance to HER heav'nly mien,  
Where joy seems dawning thro' the dim remains  
Of grief."—" Strong error still your Soul enchains,"  
My Guide reply'd, " the truth will soon be seen."

XIII.

" Yon' awful dome behold, that rounds the Pole,  
In which yon' twinkling Orbs by myriads roll,

*St. x. l. 6. Where CAIN—*] Supposed by vulgar Fabulists to be confined to the Moon, and that the Shades on her face are occasioned by his gigantic Figure. See *INFERNO*, Canto xx. Notes.

*St. xi. l. 1. No wonder Reason—*] *i. e.* No wonder Reason fails when she gets *beyond* the bounds of our sensible perceptions, when even *within* them she is so apt to go astray.

*St. xii. l. 3. —HER heav'nly mien,*] *viz.* The Moon,

Flaming intense, or, with a fainter light,  
Spangling the depth of Heav'n: if ev'ry Star  
Its various light diffus'd, as dense or rare,  
Small were the influence of these Squadrons bright.

XIV.

" Their various energy, from many a cause,  
Derives its source by Heav'n's primæval laws;  
All these, but formless quantity alone,  
On your hypothesis would sink to nought,  
All substance, blended by capricious lot,  
No other stamp nor character would own.

XV.

" If thro' its rarer parts the mimic ray  
Pass'd on, while from the dense a fainter Day  
Reflected came, and cheer'd the face of Night;  
Aspects still various would the Planet show,  
Oft as it rose upon the world below,  
As it return'd, or lost its Brother's light."

XVI.

If thro' its rarer parts the radiance ran,  
When o'er the Sun, in faded splendour wan,

*St. xiii. l. 3. —or, with a fainter light,]* It is pity the Poet had not been acquainted with the discoveries of the Telescope: he would then probably have given something amusing to the Fancy, instead of this juvenile reasoning: but the meaning of this and the following Stanzas (such as it is) is this; " If the Moon transmitted the light through her rarer parts, her phases would be perpetually changing, *i. e.* every night, according to her different aspects with respect to the Sun; and, in a Solar Eclipse, *his* light would appear through the rare parts, even if the Eclipse were total."

By PHOEBE's disk a dim eclipse were sped ;  
 Oft to our eyes th' unconquerable ray  
 Thro' the thin mask would force its glaring way,  
 And fright the world with GORGON looks of dread.

XVII.

“ This notion Truth repels, nor less remote  
 From fact you soon will find your second thought,  
 That where the Moon its shadowy vales display'd,  
 Back from the gulphy tract the beam will flow :  
 Yet the dark medium gives a fainter glow,  
 Than where her polish'd plain remits the rays.

XVIII.

“ Or, if her caves repel the radiance back,  
 As lucid Mirrors give the tints they take ;  
 You think that distance gives the dusky hue  
 To bright HYPERION's beam, reflected far  
 From the dim vallies of the CYNTHIAN Star,  
 And thence with twilight beam salutes the view.

XIX.

“ Consult Experience, still the sober Guide  
 Of Art ; his verdict will the cause decide :  
 Two Mirrors, at an equal distance place  
 In front, and more remote a third suspend ;  
 Behind you, let a lamp its radiance lend  
 To the three lucid planes that meet its rays :

*St. xviii. l. 1. Or, if her caves, &c.] i. e. If you think the deep  
 retiring parts of the Moon, because they reflect the light at a greater  
 distance from the Sun, appear darker than the rest, you are mistaken.*

XX.

“ The distant glafs will throw upon the fight,  
With equal force, the vivid ſtream of light,  
    (Altho’ upon the viſual nerve it flings  
A leſſer image,) as the Mirror nigh,  
Whoſe broad effulgence ſtrikes the gazer’s eye  
    And to the fight a double Image brings.

XXI.

“ Now, as when vernal SOL begins to glow,  
Down ſinks the wint’ry maſs of drifted ſnow  
    From Nature’s face, before his burning gaze ;  
Thus from your Mind the darkſome veſt ſhall fall,  
That hides your intellect in ſombrous pall,  
    When Truth divides the veil with piercing rays,

XXII.

“ Beneath thoſe Climes where Peace eternal reigns,  
Runs that ſtupendous Wheel, whoſe Orb contains  
    And puts in motion all the lower Spheres :  
That Orb, whoſe ever-burning eyes ſurvey  
The pendent world, and pours a mingled day,  
    Its deathleſs energy ſuſtains and ſteers.

XXIII.

“ From the PRIME MOVER, ſent thro’ boundleſs ſpace,  
Immortal ardour ſtimulates the Race

*St. xxiii. l. i. From the PRIME MOVER—] THE PRIMUM MOBILE;*  
according to the Ptolemaic Syſtem, the Meteors and heavenly  
Bodies are thus arranged :

The

Of yon' bright Couriers, as around they run ;  
 With diff'rent pow'rs and energies they shine,  
 Supply'd for ever by the hand divine  
 With the same terror that it first begun.

XXIV.

“ The nether Spheres, whose planetary dance  
 Illumes the Seasons with alternate glance,  
 From this their various energy and name  
 With each distinctive mark of essence draw,  
 Circling their orbs as Nature's eldest law  
 In CHAOS kindled first the various flame.

XXV.

“ Those great machines of him that rules above,  
 In just degrees and due proportion move,

---

The EARTH in the Centre,  
 The AIR,  
 The REGION of FIRE,  
 The MOON,  
 MERCURY,  
 VENUS,  
 SOL,  
 MARS,  
 JUPITER,  
 SATURN,  
 The EIGHTH SPHERE, where the fixed Stars are placed,  
 The PRIMUM MOBILE,  
 And,  
 The EMPYREAL HEAVEN.



And all their heav'n-sent energies employ,  
In various operations here below ;  
Thus by deduction to the scope I go,  
Which dubious erst you labour'd to descry.

XXVI.

“ These Orbs that wheel around, from heav'nly pow'r  
Take their due impulse, as the molten ore  
From plastic art ; yon' Squadrons of the Sky,  
Which move in pomp of light and shade combin'd,  
Are wielded by infinitude of Mind,  
And give his image to Reflection's eye.

XXVII.

“ And, as the Soul that moves your mortal clay  
Keeps up at once the complicated play  
Of Reason, Passion, and the plastic force  
Of life organic, in each pliant limb ;  
So all these worlds their life derive from him,  
Whose hand repels, or draws them to their source.

XXVIII.

“ This Pow'r divine with various lustre glows,  
As thro' each diff'rent medium still it flows,  
With which in vital league its essence joins,  
HERE sparkling like the beam of dawning joy,  
When first it kindles in the raptur'd eye,  
With lessen'd splendour THERE absorpt it shines.

*St. xxviii. l. 1. This Pow'r divine, &c.] This Light is reflected from its prime source, according to the different materials of the heavenly bodies, and various degrees of influence that it is intended they should produce.*

XXIX.

“ No diff’rent texture here, of dense or rare,  
Such various aspect gives to every Star ;

But HE, whose wisdom, join’d with goodness, shews  
His glory in majestic shade conceal’d,  
Or in the bright expanse of Noon reveal’d,  
As best his high perfections to disclose.”

END OF THE SECOND CANTO.

## CANTO THE THIRD.

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### ARGUMENT.

The Poet finds, in the Region of the Moon, the Spirits of those who had been by Violence compelled to infringe their Monastic Vows; and, among the rest, he meets PICARDA, the Sister of FORESE, mentioned (Canto xi.) in the PURGATORIO.

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CELESTIAL Truth, that first, by Love impress'd,  
 Had stamp'd his glorious semblance on my breast,  
 Expell'd my doubts, and all her light display'd:  
 I rais'd my eyes with purpose to declare  
 My gratitude to that celestial Fair,  
 Whose evidence my inmost Soul obey'd.

### II.

But now a fairy Pageant cross'd my view,  
 That to itself my whole attention drew,  
 The faint excuse upon my lips was lost,  
 As thro' the medium of a chrystal Sphere,  
 Or in a wat'ry Mirror, broad and clear,  
 Their Images my range of vision cross'd.

III.

Nor were they shewn in such a steady light,  
As when the limpid pool reflects to fight,  
In full dimension, and in various hue,  
The corresponding form : but blending pale,  
With the pure element they seem'd to fail,  
As twilight Ghosts their airy track pursue.

IV.

Such Forms I saw, half visible and wan,  
In pale cohorts thronging to the van,  
Not like the self-enamour'd Boy : I thought  
The magic glass a FALSE impression gave ;  
What seem'd a GENUINE Form beneath the wave,  
The Fancy of the hapless Lover caught.

V.

Sudden I turn'd, the living Shapes to view  
That 'cross my sight these wond'rous Shadows threw,  
But nought appear'd. Then to my faintly Guide  
With rev'rend awe my trembling eye I turn'd ;  
In her sweet smile immortal rapture burn'd,  
As my new wonder at the sight she spy'd.

St. iii. l. 5. *With the pure element—*] i. e. The shining atmosphere, or vapour that is described (Canto ii.) as surrounding the body of the Moon.

St. iv. l. 3. *Not like the self-enamour'd Boy—*] NARCISsus, enamoured of his shadow, thought he saw a real Substance in the Fountain. The Poet thought the Spirits he saw were Shadows, or reflections from some Forms behind him.

VI.

“ Marvel not, that your childish thought excite  
 My smile, when, wilder'd by excess of light,  
 Your foot on Truth's clear surface seems to slide,  
 As erst in Error's maze. These Forms that seem  
 To you the coinage of a dawning dream,  
 Were human Spirits erst to dust ally'd.”

VII.

“ Hither exil'd for broken vows they stray,  
 Pale Tenants of the Moon's reflected day,  
 Address the Vestals—You shall learn full soon  
 What emanations of celestial Light,  
 Still beaming inward, cheers the mental fight,  
 Tho' here confin'd within the wand'ring Moon.”

VIII.

Then a fair Shade, whom new desire to know  
 My errand, seem'd to warm with deeper glow  
 Than any other Soul, I thus address'd,  
 Tho' falt'ring, like a Man that speaks in fear :  
 “ Hail, happy Tenant of the Lunar Sphere,  
 Fix'd in the nearest Mansions of the Blest'd !

IX.

“ O thou ! that sit'st in heav'nly Light enshrin'd,  
 Quaffing th' elixir pure of joys refin'd,  
 Above all mortal sense, (for none can know  
 But those that feel the bliss,) vouchsafe to tell  
 Your pedigree, and where, in mortal cell,  
 Your Spirit sojourn'd while you dwelt below.”

X.

To me she turn'd her rapture-swimming eyes,  
And thus began : " That Love which warms the Skies  
Never permits the gate of Truth to close  
On him that mounts upon Devotion's flame,  
The knowledge of eternal things to claim :  
Heav'n's Lord the heav'nly boon on all bestows.

XI.

" When from yon' Earth I view'd the circling Sky,  
One of the holy Sisterhood was I ;  
Look well—and thro' the mask of heav'nly charms  
That dignify with more than mortal grace  
The long-remember'd looks you still may trace,  
Of young PICARDA, fav'd from Sin's alarms.

XII.

" Our passions wing'd for Heav'n, the holy Dove  
Fans to a flame of everlasting Love,  
Here in the suburbs of the Bleft we sing,  
And joy to feel the faint reflected beam,  
That warms us on the happy World's extreme,  
Coasting th' empyreal bound on tardy wing.

XIII.

" Here in the purlieus of disclosing Heav'n,  
In CYNTHIA's Orb, a lower lot is giv'n,

*St. xi. l. 6. Of young PICARDA,] A Nun of the family of DONATI in FLORENCE, taken from her Monastery by her Brother, in order to have her married ; but she was suddenly struck by a frightful leprosy, and died in a few days. RODOLPHO DE TRAVIGNANO, Annali de St. Clara, quoted by ANGELLUCCI.*

Because we fullied Truth's eternal ray  
By flighted vows."—" Yet in your looks," I said,  
" Such characters of Glory are display'd,  
I scarce recall'd them, thro' th' eclipse of Day."

XIV.

" But now I recognise that pleasing Form,  
Taught by your Voice, that us'd my heart to warm  
Struck by that heav'nly note, the waken'd Soul  
Beams in my eye with recollected pow'rs,  
Traces those lineaments that once were yours,  
And Mem'ry's hand the long past scene unrolls,

XV.

" But tell me, do you never long to rise  
To loftier stages in yon' op'ning Skies?  
Say, do your Souls to larger draughts aspire,  
Of the deep stream of life, or more to know?"  
" Our wishes," she reply'd, " in even flow,  
Follow the FIAT of our heav'nly Sire,

XVI.

" Love tunes our longings with celestial skill,  
Still to the tenour of the heav'nly will;  
What we enjoy, we love, nor wish for more:  
If we aspir'd to stations more sublime,  
Our fervours would disturb th' eternal chime  
That rules the Universe with sapient lore.

*St. xvi, l. 1. Love tunes our longings—*] The intellectual and active powers of the Mind, now freed from the obstacles of Passion, follow, under the guidance of Reason and Grace, their first destination, and conform themselves to the Divine Will.

XVII.

“ This is the POLE-STAR of eternal Joy,  
Still with celestial Wisdom to comply,  
And by his great behest our voyage steer ;  
With harmonizing will, thro’ ev’ry round  
Of this great Theatre’s eternal bound,  
Mild Resignation’s gen’ral song we hear.

XVIII.

“ When to his great design our will accords,  
This high communion to the Soul affords  
A sense of bliss, which in those climes on high  
Is only known ; yon’ Orbs that never stay,  
Shadow, as thro’ yon’ boundless space they play,  
The mental harmony that fills the Sky.

XIX.

“ With steady course, to that unbounded Deep  
All things their everlasting tenour keep,  
And hither fleet on Diffolution’s wing.”  
This clear’d my doubts at once, for hence I knew,  
That, tho’ each Tribe a various portion drew,  
Each quaff’d sufficient of th’ eternal Spring.

XX.

As one invited to a various feast  
Feels, as he feeds, his appetite increas’d  
For dainties yet untry’d, and calls for more,  
Even yet, while thankful for the former boon ;  
So from this charming Vestal of the Moon  
I long to learn what Tribe she join’d of yore.



XXI.

“ Ah where,” I cry’d, “ was that celestial twine  
Of life you drew, which glow’d with tints divine,  
Marr’d by invidious Fate before its close.”  
“ To CLARA,” she reply’d, “ I gave my Name :  
CLARA, whose fainted Soul’s instinctive flame  
Aloft in purer fields of Æther glows.

XXII.

“ In dedication to her heav’nly Spouse,  
Her nightly visions and her daily vows  
She gave, abstracted from terrestrial cares ;  
Vows which, when heav’n-born Charity inspires  
With smile benignant from his subject Choirs,  
He still receives, and wafts them to the Stars,

XXIII.

“ By her example fir’d, with ardent mind  
I sought the Shade, and left the World behind ;  
And thro’ the Cloisters dim, with sacred rage,  
The Vestal’s course pursu’d in faintly stole,  
Resolv’d to follow to th’ eternal goal  
Her spotless steps o’er yon’ sublunar stage.

XXIV.

“ But wicked man, for ever prone to vice,  
Th’ asylum forc’d, and broke the hallow’d tier  
That bound my Soul to Heav’n ; that Heav’n which  
With what regret my sacred vows I broke, [knows  
What long atoning toils I undertook  
Heav’n to appease, before my final close.

XXV.

“ This Spirit which appears upon my right,  
Like CYNTHIA rising in the van of Night,  
A moving Mirror to the solar ray,  
Like me, if she vouchsaf'd to speak, could show  
The same sad image of a broken vow,  
When from her brow they rent the veil away.

XXVI.

“ Tho' forc'd from Contemplation's holy steep,  
Among the Pageants of the World to weep,  
Her heart still harbour'd with the Vestal Train,  
Ill-fated CONSTANCE ! an Imperial Spouse,  
And Throne, but ill repaid thy broken vows,  
Altho' thy Son eclips'd the SUABIAN reign.

XXVII.

She spoke, and with a soft melodious Hymn  
Thro' the clear Medium seem'd away to skim,  
'Till Voice and Image both at once were lost;  
Quick as the parting waters seem to close,  
When the heav'd plummet to the bottom goes,  
Seem'd the quick passage of the parting Ghost.

*St. xxvi. l. 4. Ill-fated CONSTANCE ! ] Daughter to ROGER, King of APULIA, and a professed Nun ; but taken from a Convent to marry the Emperor HENRY, Son to FREDERIC BARBAROSSA, by whom she had FREDERIC, afterwards the second Emperor of that name. See Hist. Flor. Plat. vitæ Bonifacii octavi et Gregorii noni Pontificum.*

XXVIII.

Long thro' the Moon-light scene I search'd in vain,  
Then weary turn'd me to my Guide again,  
And met her eyes ; where, like the Morning Star  
Fresh ris'n, a keener glory seem'd to play :  
Scarce could I bear the Spirit-piercing ray,  
Nor dar'd I question yet the heav'nly Fair.

END OF THE THIRD CANTO.



CANTO THE FOURTH.

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ARGUMENT.

Several Conferences held between the Poet and BEATRICE, on the Nature of mixed and free Will, and Monastic Vows.

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**S**USPENCE would sink the famish'd Man to dust  
Before he fed, if drawn by equal guft  
Between two luscious banquets fix'd he stood ;  
A Lamb between two Wolves, with equal fear  
Would stand ; or Dog between two trembling Deer,  
When diff'rent ways they seek the shelt'ring wood.

II.

Thus, in the dark dilemma of the Mind,  
Silent I stood, nor motive yet could find  
In either scale my dubious Mind to sway:  
Faultless, yet wav'ring long, I weigh'd them still,  
Yet in my face, the veering of my will  
Began my mental conflict to display.

III.

The heav'nly Vestal, like the HEBREW Youth,  
Who found the means the Despot's rage to soothe,  
My thoughts perceiv'd ; and, with the potent spell  
Of vocal magic, spoke my doubts away :  
“ I see,” she cry'd, “ how with alternate sway  
Still new perplexities your utterance quell.

IV.

“ You ask, if my intention still remain  
(Tho' outward force compel) without a stain,  
Why is my Bliss abridg'd, for others' fault ?”—  
“ A second question rises in your Soul,  
You wish to know, if these forsake the Pole  
For dust, foredoom'd to claim their ancient lot.

V.

“ Beneath th' alternate shock your Reason reels,  
But that whose pregnant meaning most conceals

*St. iii. l. 1. —the HEBREW Youth]* DANIEL, who by finding out NEBUCHADNEZZAR's dream, as BEATRICE discovered the doubts in the mind of the Poet, (Dan. ii. 8.) prevented the effects of his Anger.

*St. iv. l. 1. You ask, &c.]* Two questions are comprized in this Stanza, viz. 1. If a vow broken by compulsion implies guilt ? and, 2. Whether Souls are pre-existent to their state in this world ?

*St. iv. l. 4. A second question, &c.] i. e.* Your opinion seems to imply, that these Spirits were inhabitants of certain Planets, before their immersion into terrestrial bodies, to which Planets they must ascend by a sort of instinct, after they forsake the Earth.

*St. v, vi, vii, viii.]* These are all described as having their portion in the empyreal Heaven, though their different allotments of happiness are thus represented, as if they had their stations in the several Planets.

Of mental poison, first we try to quell;  
The Sage, whose faulchion drank the tyrant gore,  
And he whose mandate thinn'd the MEMPHIAN shore,  
In the same Heav'n with these delighted dwell.

VI.

“ Saint JOHN, and she that heard the Seraph's voice,  
And all his flaming Brethren of the Skies,  
Tho' far above the Stars they dwell sublime,  
Drink from one common source of joy, and raise  
A gen'ral Pæan of harmonious praise,  
Not short of Bliss, nor circumscrib'd by Time.

VII.

“ In this wide Theatre of Life and Light,  
The pure primæval beam salutes the sight,  
In all the bright diversities of Day,  
Reflected in this wide majestic round,  
From ev'ry blissful Stage thro' space profound,  
Far, far beyond the Sun and Milky Way.

VIII.

In various portions comes the vital gale,  
Breathing soft raptures thro' th' ELYSIAN Vale;  
Not in the wand'ring Stars these Spirits move,  
But these bright Squadrons of the Skies that glow  
With various Lights, in mystic semblance shew  
The diff'rent Stages of the Blest above.

IX.

“ Thus to your Senses, by the will of Heav'n,  
An awful prospect in the Skies is giv'n,

Shadowing eternal things, beyond the ken  
Of mortal sight ; as in the Prophet's lore,  
To him, whom all these trembling Worlds adore,  
Are giv'n the organs and the limbs of Man.

X.

“ Hence, too, the flaming Ministers above,  
With starry plumes adorn'd, and looks of Love,  
Our pictur'd walls and glowing tablets show ;  
Nor from the Stars, as PLATO taught, descends  
The Choir of Souls ; or, on the dust depends,  
For their material vesture here below.

XI.

“ Thither, his words report, thro' Æther borne,  
They go in downward voyage, and return  
When Fate commands to drop the vest of clay :  
Perhaps the words another sense may bear,  
Perhaps he meant, that from the stellar Sphere  
A various influence spreads with various sway.

XII.

“ If so, not wide of truth her shaft might fall,  
But that sad error o'er yon' earthly ball

*St. ix, x.]* Heaven, by this representation, condescends to adapt itself to human conception ; as, in the revealed word, by adapting to the Almighty human organs and passions.

*St. xii.]* Here he supposes, that PLATO, who often wrote allegorically, meant, by describing the Stars as receptacles of pre-existent and departed Souls, only the several influences by which the Planets were formerly supposed to govern terrestrial bodies, and which afterwards gave occasion to idolatry.



Bad influence sow'd : when mad'ning Tribes ador'd  
**MARS, HERMES, BACCHUS**, for their fancied aid,  
 With rev'rence low, and various rites obey'd,  
 Rebels declar'd to Heav'n's Almighty Lord.

XIII.

" That other doubt, which darkens in your Mind,  
 Has less of Death, as not so closely join'd  
 With Infidelity, which leads astray  
 The Soul from God ; for, tho' the doom appear  
 (When Force impels the action) too severe,  
 Your doubts, by Faith dispell'd, will melt away.

XIV.

" But now my friendship shall remove the veil,  
 Whose mystic folds the mighty truth conceal,  
 And fully vindicate the ways of GOD:  
 Force may excuse, when still the Will remains  
 Free, and unfetter'd by the Body's chains,  
 Alike victorious over Force or Fraud.

XV.

" It triumphs, if, like Flame's aspiring force,  
 Tho' buffeted by tempests, still it soars  
 With native instinct to its heav'nly goal ;  
 But if beneath the Tyrant's nod it bends,  
 Or follows where he leads, its glory ends,  
 Dependent now it owns his dark control.

XVI.

" These lunar Vestals, from their path compell'd,  
 Strove not to rally, but resign'd the field,

Nor struggled to regain EMMANUEL's Fold ;  
 Not thus LORENZO scorn'd the fatal brand,  
 Nor MUTIUS, when he rais'd his flaming hand ;  
 But those their slighted vows for pleasure fold.

XVII.

“ They might have still resum'd their former post,  
 Free to regain the glories they had lost ;  
 But such heroic Souls are thinly sown  
 In yonder world. By this your doubts are clear'd,  
 If you have duly weigh'd what now you heard,  
 Observant of the word of truth alone.

XVIII.

“ But other rising doubts within I spy,  
 That darkly hover o'er your mental eye ;  
 Falseness, you deem, these Souls could never stain,  
 For here the Lamp of Truth serenely shines  
 Above, and from her odious taint refines  
 Each chosen Saint that owns her lucid reign.

XIX.

“ Yet you have heard from that celestial Fair,  
 That CONSTANCE, in her heart, with pious care,  
 Her first affection kept, tho' borne away  
 From her prime Love ; and yet you heard from me,  
 That worldly love obtain'd the victory  
 O'er her lost heart, and kept her GOD at bay.

*St. xvi. l. 4, 5. LORENZO—MUTIUS] Scævola. The first, a celebrated Martyr ; see his Legend. The history of the second, is well known.*

XX.

“ Oft bends the heart before the coming storm,  
 Ev’n when the Soul, with strong affection warm,  
     Would steer a diff’rent course, if not compell’d  
 Against this bias. Wrath’s imperious force  
 ALCMÆON prov’d, tho’ smit with deep remorse,  
     His noble Father’s wrongs his bosom steel’d.

XXI.

“ His filial piety to one impress’d  
 By Nature’s hand, against the other’s breast  
     Pointed his cruel steel: Collect from hence,  
 How outward force can mingle with the Will  
 Her deadly bane, or mine with cruel skill  
     The fortress meant for Virtue’s best defence.

XXII.

“ To broad and glaring crimes the startled Mind  
 Falts at first; but soon, with Art refin’d,  
     It palliates the offence, or spies afar  
 Some deeper danger; if this venial vice  
 It shuns, spontaneous then it shuts its eyes,  
     And half its heav’n-bred horror melts in air.

*St. xx. l. 5. ALCMÆON,] Who revenged upon his Mother  
 ERIPHILE, his Father’s death. See PURGATORIO, Canto xx.  
 Notes.*

*Passion (as Revenge, in the instance of ALCMÆON) may acquire such force, that it cannot be withstood; yet it cannot serve for a valid excuse for Vice, for then there would be no check necessary against its indulgence. The analysis of motives will be considered when we come to speak of the freedom of the Will.*

XXIII.

“ PICARDA meant the Will, when uncontroll’d  
By Vice, it boldly mans the mental hold ;  
I spoke of that which slumbers half subdu’d,  
Yet, conscious of its duty, still retains  
Its virtuous bias, tho’ beset with chains,  
Or whelm’d beneath the gulph by tempests rude.”

XXIV.

So flow’d the fount of Truth, that swept away  
My misconceptions with a flood of Day.  
“ Fav’rite of Heav’n, unrivall’d Maid,” I cry’d,  
“ Your words have plung’d me in a sea profound  
Of Wonder and of Love ! my Senses, drown’d  
In blifs, yet feel the heart-reviving tide.

XXV.

“ But little can my shallow stream of Love  
Cope with that beauteous flood, which from above  
Absorbs my Soul, and overpow’rs my Mind :  
But that creative, that watchful Eye  
That guides and governs all, will soon supply  
New vigour to my Love, that lags behind.

XXVI.

“ I feel, I feel the Mind’s insatiate powers  
Never can rest, until the holy Source  
Of Light and Life irradiate all the Soul ;  
As some wild Tenant of the lonely Wood  
Ranges, nor knows repose, ’till fill’d with food  
We rest not short of that celestial goal.

XXVII.

“ Nor fruitless is the hope, unless Desire,  
That fills the bosom with instinctive fire  
And warms the Soul to spurn sublunar things,  
Be giv’n in vain ; but as new tendrils grow  
From the lopp’d stem, so, from my wish to know,  
Another doubt with new-born vigour springs.

XXVIII.

“ As o’er the ALPINE heights, with gradual rise,  
’Till the last summit seems to meet the Skies,  
We mount ; so, climbing up the gradual scale  
Of Truth, by many a long laborious stage  
We mount the Steep ;—but thou hast giv’n the pledge,  
That heav’nly Grace will all my doubts dispel.

XXIX.

“ Can Man by other duties pay the price  
Of broken vows and violated ties,

*St. xxviii.] See the Simile in POPE’s Essay on Criticism :*

So pleas’d at first the tow’ring Alps we try,  
Mount o’er the Vales, and seem to tread the Sky ;  
Th’ eternal snows appear already past,  
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last ;  
But, these attain’d, we tremble to survey  
The growing labours of the length’ned way,  
Th’ increasing prospect tires our lab’ring eyes,  
Hills peep o’er Hills, and ALPS on ALPS arise, &c.

It is remarkable that this is applied pretty nearly to the same purpose by both Poets ; nor is it unlikely that POPE might have borrowed it, either immediately from DANTE, or through some obscure medium,

So as his merits his defaults may weigh  
In Heav'n's impartial scale?" Serenely bright,  
She turn'd her eyes with such a piercing light,  
I sunk, o'ermafter'd by the heav'nly ray.

END OF THE FOURTH CANTO.

## CANTO THE FIFTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

BEATRICE solves the doubts of the Poet with regard to Vows.—  
Their ascent to the Planet MERCURY described.

---

“ IF Love has kindled in this lunar Sphere  
A flame, that scarce your mortal eyes can bear,  
Far, far beyond the dim and fummy fire  
That burns beneath, let not your wonder grow;  
Clear INTUITION gives that angel glow,  
Keen is our sight, and warmly we admire.

### II.

“ I see (for nought can cheat a Spirit's sight)  
The scintillations of eternal light  
Flash from your Mind, tho' clad in earthly shroud:  
Bright emanation! wherefoe'er it burns,  
Its keen reflex the sister Soul returns,  
If intercepted by no sensual cloud.

III.

“ This, by indubitable signs, is seen  
 Warm from your heart enkindling all your mien ;  
 And oft, tho’ phantoms of unreal good  
 Awoke its fire of old, the restless flame  
 Show’d from what godlike origin it came,  
 Till from the low terrestrial fume subdu’d.

IV.

“ You wish to know, if for a slighted vow  
 Good deeds can pay, and on the Mind bestow  
 Security and Peace.”—The heav’nly Maid  
 Thus read my thought, and with preamble sweet  
 Again began my rising doubts to meet,  
 And heav’nly themes in heav’nly words convey’d;

V.

“ That gem above all price by wisdom giv’n,  
 The most distinguish’d boon of fav’ring Heav’n,  
 The stamp of Godhead on the human breast,  
 By him most priz’d, is LIBERTY of CHOICE ;  
 A gift by none beneath the ambient Skies  
 But happy rationals alone possess.

VI.

“ You thence, by easy inference, may know  
 Th’ importance of a voluntary vow,  
 Stamp’d by the sov’reign Fiat of the Skies :  
 For then, by sacred compact we restore  
 The precious gift, which Heav’n consign’d of yore,  
 A free-will off’ring giv’n with heart and voice.

St. vi. l. 6. *A free-will offering—*] The Image of God, in  
 which, we are taught, Man is made, must consist in the freedom  
 of



VII.

“ For this, what compensation can we pay ?  
 Can we the guilt of plunder purge away,  
     By dedication of our pilfer’d gain  
 To pious uses ? but the heav’nly See  
 Grants dispensations to an urgent plea,  
     And seems to render half my reasons vain.

VIII.

“ And since this Truth seems harder to digest,  
 A while continue at the mental feast ;  
     The murky vapour will vanish soon :  
 Prepare your Mind the stamp of Truth to feel,  
 Deep let it sink, like an impressive seal,  
     Else knowledge fades before the waning Moon.

IX.

“ Two qualities, the COMPACT and the CAUSE,  
 The obligation give, and form the laws,  
     That with a solemn tie the Conscience bind :  
 The COMPACT’s breach draws down the wrath of  
 But to the CAUSE a laxer law is given ;     [Heav’n,  
     The means may change, but not the Vot’ry’s Mind.

of the Will; *eminanter* (as the school-men say): therefore the Will can be the only offering of any value we can make to the Deity.

St. vii, viii, ix.] DANTE is evidently here under awe, either of the Holy See, or the Secular Arm; the doctrine of vows and of permutation, was so lucrative to the Church during the middle ages, that she was very jealous of any thing that encroached upon her

X.

“ A pious HEBREW, without guilt or fraud,  
 Could change his victim, yet appease his God;  
 There permutation was a gen’ral right;  
 But let no human arrogance presume  
 By his own reason to commute his doom—  
 Saint PETER’s keys must ope the gates of Light.”

XI.

“ The CHANGE is Sin, unless the off’ring giv’n  
 Will fully satisfy offended Heav’n,  
 And far exceeds the present you withhold  
 In genuine worth ; the gifts that far outweigh  
 All price, what compensation can repay?  
 Not TAPROBANA’s gems, nor OPHIR’s gold.

---

her privileges. It is however observable, that he speaks with due decorum of the Ecclesiastical Power of dispensing with Vows ; he refers in the last resort to the Scriptures, which will shew us that we are bound to keep them, if they do not interfere with some higher obligation, as in the case of JEPHTHAH’S vow. But he seems to have introduced the subject for the sake of making some important observations on the difference between absolute compulsion, where the Will is not concerned, and that pretended necessity, where it pleads the irresistible impulse of the Passions.

*St. xi. l. 5. — what compensation can repay ?*] Nothing can properly compensate for the omission of dedicating the Will to God ; the gift, which in his eye far outweighs all price : therefore to compensate for a continuance in Sin by pecuniary oblations, is an expedient that leads to ruin.

Our improvement, not only in science, but in real virtue and goodness, depends upon the train of thought in which the Mind is usually employed, either in the vacant or serious hours : as far,  
 therefore,

XII.

“ Mortals ! before your Soul you thus engage,  
Ponder ! but firmly pay the sacred pledge,  
Nor in a dire dilemma bind your Soul  
As JEPHTHA did ; he broke, when first he swore,  
Heav’n’s law, and, had his hand abstain’d from gore,  
Lefs guilty had he reach’d the final goal.

XIII.

“ Far lefs remorse ATRIDES too had felt,  
When IPHIGENIA try’d in vain to melt

therefore, as the direction of our thoughts is in our power, (and that it is so in a great measure cannot be doubted,) it is of the last importance to give them that direction which is most subservient to these valuable purposes.

What employment can *be* be engaged in, worthy of a Man, whose imagination is *always* occupied about objects low and base, and in the same narrow circle ? How different from him, whose train of thought has led him to take his *favourite* range, through whatever is new or beautiful, grand or important ; through whatever is illustrious in the human character, or attractive in moral qualities ?

While he views what is truly great and glorious in the human character, his Soul catches the divine flame, and burns to emulate what it admires.—REID, on the Intellectual Powers of Man, Vol. ii. Essay 4.

On these trains of ideas the strength of the habits and passions depends, which often lays the WILL under a sort of restraint, from which Reason strives to extricate it in vain ; we are led to commit actions, for which, while we do, we condemn ourselves : but this impulse is not invincible ; we can stop ourselves in the career, and enter on a contrary course.—See LOCKE’S Essay, l. ii. c. 21.

His

His stony heart with Pity's pearly dew :  
 Tho' sunk in grief, the thoughtless and the sage  
 Wept the dire scene upon the bloody stage,  
 And tears distill'd where'er the rumour flew.

XIV.

" Blindly they trod in Fate's perplexing maze,  
 Ere Heav'n's bright Day-star came to light their ways;  
 But ye, that bask in his meridian ray,  
 Walk steady on, observe where danger lies;  
 Nor with each random current of the Skies,  
 Like feathers float around in wanton play.

XV.

" Think not, when Sin has dy'd in STYGIAN grain  
 Your Souls, that ev'ry pool will cleanse the stain :  
 Consult the code of SALEM, and the Sage  
 That best his text explains, and then pursue  
 The steady path where ZION's tow'rs in view,  
 And for Salvation trust the sacred Page,

XVI.

" Degen'rate Souls! resume your heav'nly gust,  
 Nor like the swinish crew, to ev'ry lust  
 Enthralld, in CIRCE's talks consume your days :  
 Let not the Scorners laugh to see you slide,  
 Nor like the Lamb, forsake your Mother's side,  
 That hunts the shade, and with the phantom plays."

XVII.

Thus spoke the heav'nly Maid, and turn'd her face  
 Where first the mounting Sun begins his race ;

Her

Her looks and words the rising question quell'd :  
The arrow springs not from the twanging yew  
With half the speed that after her I flew,  
O'er the broad bosom of the heav'nly field.

XVIII.

Nor finds the shaft its distant mark so soon,  
As to the Son of MAIA from the Moon  
Soaring we came ; but, kindling in her race,  
The Virgin's charms her former charms surpass'd ;  
On her a glorious smile the Planet cast,  
Which she return'd, commingling blaze with blaze.

XIX.

When HERMES, thro' his scintillating round,  
The coming of the heav'nly stranger own'd,  
Could I, refin'd by Heav'n, alive all o'er  
To each ætherial transmutation, own  
Less than this sparkling neighbour of the Sun ?  
What could I less than tremble and adore !

XX.

Then, as the Tenants of the limpid lake,  
Each deep recess and shadowy haunt forfake,  
When o'er the pool the sportive Image plays  
That 'lures them with the hopes of sweet repast,  
Spring up in shoals : thus o'er the prospect vast  
A glitt'ring squadron came, like dancing rays.

*St. xviii. l. 2.—Son of MAIA,] The Planet MERCURY, next to the Moon in the Ptolemaic System.*

*St. xix. l. 4, 5, and 6.] i. e. The Planet shewed signs of gratulation to BEATRICE, and seemed to exhibit symptoms of admiration at her improved charms ; and could I do less ?*

XXI.

" At length we see the happy Soul's release ;  
He comes, our holy fervours to increase."

They said, and pass'd me with obeisance low :  
One more transported than the rest I view'd,  
A glory hung around him as he stood,  
Bright as the colours of the show'ry bow.

XXII.

" Think, mortal ! if your dearest hopes were cross'd,  
Or heav'nly themes begun were sudden lost ;  
How would you grieve, or deem your lot severe !  
Then may you judge, with what intense desire  
I burn'd, the fates and fortunes to enquire  
Of those bright Tenants of the radiant Sphere.

XXIII.

" Fav'rite of Heav'n ! thro' this celestial zone  
Allow'd to range, and view the moving throne  
That leads the triumphs of the Saints on high,  
While yet you combat with the bands of Death,  
Ere yet allow'd to drop the shield of Faith ;  
Welcome, thrice welcome to your native Sky.

XXIV.

" Fill'd by that beam that lightens all the place,  
If you desire of our abundant grace  
To share, but speak the word, and save your Soul."  
Thus one of these illustrious Spirits said.  
" Answer yourself," exclaim'd the heav'nly Maid ;  
" Like Gods, they know the secrets of the Pole.

XXV.

“ O thou ! that 'midst the uncreated beam,  
 (Transmits her light in many a lucid stream,)  
 From the pure mirror of th' Eternal Mind,  
 Thou read'st my wish, for in thy sunny eyes  
 Plainly we see the Secrets of the Skies,  
 Else for terrestrial vision too refin'd.

XXVI.

“ I long to know your fortune and your name ;  
 And why, a neighbour to the solar flame,  
 You chuse to revel in the flood of Light,  
 Sent from the Day-spring of the Sky afar,  
 That hides from mortal view this favour'd Star,  
 To us eclips'd as by the veil of Night.”

XXVII.

The radiant heir of joy I thus address'd;  
 Then, as the Sun, from vapours dim releas'd,  
 Beams from the point of Noon with lordly eye ;  
 With more of Heav'n he seem'd to look and move,  
 All luminous with growing light and love,  
 And thus I heard the viewless Saints reply.

*St. xxv. l. 5. Plainly we see the Secrets— ] i. e. The Secrets of the Skies are known to thee, as we can discern by thy looks; which show us, by a most engaging resemblance, things otherwise far too sublime for our conception.*





## CANTO THE SIXTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

The Poet meets with the Spirit of JUSTINIAN, who laments the fall of the Empire.

---

“ WHEN ROME’s Imperial Eagle soar’d away,  
Steering her flight against the rising ray,  
Wing’d by great CONSTANTINE, to seek the soil  
From whence the Warrior loos’d his fatal prow,  
Who with LAVINIA pledg’d his second vow,  
Near the dark HELLESPONT she clos’d his toil.

### II.

“ Two hundred circles of the Sun and more,  
Had seen his airy on his native shore,

*St. i. l. 3.—to seek the soil, &c. ]* CONSTANTINOPLE, founded by CONSTANTINE, opposite to the coast of ASIA MINOR, from which the first colony that, under the conduct of ÆNEAS, were supposed to be the remote founders of ROME, took their origin

Safe in his mighty wings extended shade,  
On fair EUROPA'S verge: there many a hand,  
From year to year, the rod of Empire spann'd,  
Ere time to me the sign of rule convey'd.

III.

"JUSTINIAN I was call'd—The legal code,  
Warm'd by humanity and love to God,  
My hand reform'd; with long assiduous care  
Its rigors I relax'd, or nerv'd anew  
Its too indulgent laws, till SATAN drew  
Around my heedless steps his fatal snare.

IV.

"The close connexion of the Pow'r divine  
With frail humanity on DAVID'S line,  
Stagger'd my faith, till AGABITUS came,  
And purg'd the film terrene that dimm'd my sight:  
Now I behold in Heav'n's meridian light,  
Things far beyond a mortal's feeble aim.

V.

"My heart I gave to Heav'n, kind Heav'n inspir'd  
Noble designs, and all my bosom fir'd  
With hope to mitigate those ills that wait  
On social life; while, with sagacious care,  
Great BELISARIUS kept the storm of war  
Aloof, and left me time to cure the State.

*St. iv. l. 3. AGABITUS—*] A Saint, who is said to have converted JUSTINIAN from the EUTYCHIAN Heresy.

*St. v. l. 5. Great BELISARIUS—*] The famous conqueror of AFRICA. See GIBBON'S Hist. Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. vii. 8vo edit.

VI.

“ This your first question solves ; but ere I tell  
The state of those that here in transport dwell,  
A short digression claims the foremost place,  
To shew the guilt of these contending Bands  
That rend th’ Imperial sign with bloody hands,  
Which GUELPHS oppose, and Ghibellines disgrace.

VII.

“ From that dread moment when young PALLAS fell,  
It seem’d like young AURORA to dispel  
The shades of Night, and lift its sacred head,  
Hovering above proud ALBA’s regal tow’rs,  
Till full three hundred Suns had run their course,  
Then, when the three bold brethren fell, it fled.

VIII.

“ What glories in the field it won, you know,  
From the rapt SABINE to LUCRETIA’s woe ;  
While seven successive Kings its flag unfurl’d  
Against the neighb’ring tribes : and how the GAUL  
And GREEK beheld their bloody banner fall,  
Before the future Mistress of the world.

*St. vi. l. 4. — contending Bands*] See Hist. Flor.

*St. vii. l. 1. Young PALLAS—*] The Ally of ÆNEAS, slain by  
TURNUS. VIRG. ÆN. x.

*St. vii. l. 4. ALBA—*] Founded, as it is supposed, by ASCANIUS.

*St. viii. l. 2. From the rapt SABINE to LUCRETIA’s woe;—*] The  
Story of the SABINES and LUCRETIA are well known.

IX.

“ TORQUATUS, QUINTUS, long on earth renown’d ;  
The FABIAN and the DECIAN name shall sound,  
In the full Pæans of the Blest above:  
Under that dreadful ensign, waving high,  
Thro’ the dark natives of a burning Sky  
They mow’d their way, where Po’s deep waters move.

X.

“ When that proud standard led the long array,  
The bloody fields beneath the setting day  
Planted with trophies, show’d the mighty hand  
Of SCIPIO, where it rag’d : while sunward led,  
Great POMPEY’s bands the sign of battle spread ;  
A name yet mournful to thy native land.

XI.

“ But, ere the nations rested yet from blood,  
Ere heav’nly Peace her radiant aspect shew’d,

*St. ix. l. 1. TORQUATUS—*] Who ordered his Son to be beheaded for a breach of military orders.

*QUINTUS—*] QUINTUS CINCINNATUS, called from the Plough to the Dictatorship. Liv. Dec. i. lib. iii.

*St. ix. l. 2. The FABIAN and the DECIAN—*] The FABII and DECII both devoted themselves for their country, though in a different way.—Liv. Dec. i. lib. vii, viii, ix.

*St. ix. l. 4. Under that dreadful Ensign—*] Wars with HANNIBAL, in the North of ITALY.

*St. x. l. 4. SCIPIO—*] SCIPIO AFRICANUS.

And on the ranfom'd clime serenely fmil'd ;  
 Great JULIUS by the vote of ROME arofe,  
 The VAR, the RHINE, his early triumphs knows,  
 The RHONE, the SEINE, and ESAR's utmost wild.

XII.

“ From fad RAVENNA, thro' the ROMAN Sky  
 So fwift his Eagles flew, the Poet's eye  
 The lightning of their courfe could hardly fcan ;  
 He ftruck MASSILIA, and he conquer'd SPAIN,  
 Then on his fmoking path return'd again,  
 And back like thunder to DURAZZO ran.

XIII.

“ Thence, without refpite, on the foe he flew,  
 And o'er the mountains of THESSALIA drew  
 His cohorts, like the flying rock of Heav'n  
 When POMPEY's angry clarion call'd afar—  
 Old NILE ! you wept the victim of the war,  
 By unrelenting fate to flaughter giv'n.

XIV.

“ Soon to ANTANDROS on the winds he pafs'd,  
 Where HECTOR's tomb o'erlooks the wat'ry wafte,  
 And thence o'er Egypt his deftroying hand  
 Stretch'd, like an angry God ; his conqu'ring hoft  
 With fiery-footed rage the Defart crofs'd,  
 And pour'd deftruction on NUMIDIA's band.

*St. xii. l. 6. DURAZZO—]* See LUCAN, lib. vi.

*St. xiv. l. 6. And pour'd deftruction on NUMIDIA's band.]* Con-  
 queft of PHARNACES, King of PONTUS, on which occafion CÆSAR  
 fent the famous difpatch—VENI, VIDI, VICI.

XV.

“ Again the welkin rung with new alarms,  
The vengeful brood of POMPEY calls to arms ;  
Sad theme of sorrow in the depths of Hell,  
Where fullen CASSIUS, in alternate lay,  
With BRUTUS chants OCTAVIAN’S mighty sway,  
And Demons listen while their doom they tell,

XVI,

“ His deeds MUTINA with PERUSIA know,  
And CLEOPATRA’S sunk in deepest woe,  
Who fled the venom’d asp’s rage in vain ;  
To the red Sea his conqu’ring Eagle flew,  
Till Peace recall’d the golden age anew,  
And JANUS clos’d his jarring valves again.

XVII,

“ But all th’ Imperial Ensign’s spreading fame  
(Past and to come) had sunk before the claim  
Of the third Owner of the sov’reign pow’r,  
Had he but seiz’d the fair occasion giv’n,  
To ’venge the slighted dignity of Heav’n,  
When the MESSIAH bled on JORDAN’S shore,

XVIII.

“ But heav’nly Justice, tho’ in torpor deep  
In dark VESPASIAN’S breast it seem’d to sleep,

*St. xvi. l. 1. His deeds—]* viz. AUGUSTUS. See APPIAN,  
CICERO, ad Atticum. SUTONIUS, in Aug. VELL. PATERC.

*St. xvii. l. 3. Of the third Owner—]* TIBERIUS!!!

Like

Like lightning darted on the purer Mind  
 Of TITUS, when, by holy wrath inspir'd,  
 From SALEM's factious rebels he requir'd  
 The debt of vengeance by his God enjoin'd.

XIX.

" When with envenom'd tooth the ALPINE snake,  
 Stealing insidious from his native brake,  
 The holy Vestal on her shrine assail'd ;  
 My Eagle, rousing at the GALLIC cry,  
 With lightning on his pinions swept the Sky,  
 And the fell reptile to his den repell'd.

XX.

" Hence may your judgment on the feuds decide,  
 That waste my old dominion far and wide ;  
 But who can tell who most our peace destroys ?  
 He who displays the lilied flag afar,  
 Or with th' Imperial Sign provokes the war ;  
 My bleeding country each in turn destroys.

XXI.

" False Ghibelline ! the sacred symbol yield,  
 That leads your legions to the bloody field ;

*St. xviii. l. 6. The debt of vengeance —*] Destruction of  
 JERUSALEM by TITUS. Compare MATTHEW xxiv. with JOSE-  
 PHUS, DE BELLO JUDAICO, lib. vii.

*St. xix. l. 6. — When with envenom'd tooth, &c.]* A strange ana-  
 chronism—the defeat of DESIDERIUS, King of LOMBARDY, by  
 CHARLEMAGNE, was 300 years after the time of JUSTINIAN.—  
 See Hist. Flor,

*St. xxi. l. 1. False Ghibelline !—]* The Poet reprehends the  
 conduct of the Ghibellines, or Imperial Faction, although he

Or with more noble arts adorn your name :  
Just in the cause in which you should display  
That sacred Ensign in the eye of Day,  
ASTREA's cause and HER's should be the same.

XXII.

" Shall ANJOU's pride th' Imperial Eagle dare ?—  
A nobler Savage in a bloodier war  
Has felt his talons and forsook the field :  
The Son has often mourn'd the Father's crime ;  
Heav'n will not circumvent his flight sublime,  
In partial favour to the lili'd shield.

XXIII.

" This little world that kindles in the trace  
Of PHOEBE's Ear, and wheels his burning race  
Nearer his throne, contains within its bound  
Those Souls refin'd, who, by the gen'ral flame  
Of honour, fir'd to win a deathless name,  
Fill'd with incessant toil their mortal round.

---

belonged to it himself. He not only alludes here to the disputes between BONIFACE and PHILIP LE BEL of FRANCE, but to that of CHARLES of ANJOU, and the other branch of the NORMAN line, in the South of ITALY ; a dispute originally fomented by the Pope, who, continually involved in quarrels with the SICILIAN Princes of the latter family, on account of investitures and homage, transferred their *Dominions* to the Family of VALOIS, and by that means laid the foundation for a series of wars which lasted for Centuries. See GIANNONE, Hist. Nap. and Florentine History annexed.



XXIV.

“ Their ardent eyes were fix’d on Fame alone,  
 With poor ambition to this lower zone,  
 Their aspirations took their humble flight :  
 Thrice happy ! if, to further Heav’n’s design,  
 Their days were spent, and then a brighter Sign,  
 Had giv’n a fairer lot of Love and Light.

XXV.

“ But to compare our virtues with our gains,  
 Is one glad task of these Cærulean plains,  
 So well adjusted by the heav’nly scale ;  
 New transport from the contemplation flows,  
 Till with intenser flame the Spirit glows,  
 O’er which nor doubt nor envy can prevail.

XXVI.

“ As diff’rent notes in harmony conspire,  
 So in gradation due, our heav’nly choir,  
 A general symphony of transport swell :  
 See ROMEO’s Spirit where it moves along,  
 And sheds new glory on the chosen throng ;  
 He, for his gen’rous toils, untimely fell.

XXVII.

“ But soon RAIMONDO’s province paid the fine,  
 For his base tréatment of the Man divine ;

*St. xxvii. l. 2.—the Man divine,]* ROMEO, a Man of great sanctity, who, on his return from a Pilgrimage from St. JAGO DI CAMPOSTELLA, was entertained by RAYMOND BERLINGHIER, Count

For their proud Lord the people much endur'd.  
 Ill fares the Man whom envy leads astray ;  
 His four fair Daughters shar'd Imperial sway :  
 A poor and lonely Sage their crowns secur'd.

XXVIII.

“ Base sycophants employ'd their usual art,  
 And RAYMOND's Soul, by slander's rankling dart  
 Empoison'd, found the baleful venom spread :  
 He call'd him to refund his hoarded gain ;  
 With calm integrity the hoary Swain  
 The spring-tide of the public wealth display'd.

XXIX.

“ Thence worn with years and poverty he stray'd,  
 And thro' ungrateful nations begg'd his bread,

---

Count of PROVENCE, who found him such an able Financier, that he made him his Minister. By his negotiations BERLINGHIER found means to marry his four Daughters to four crowned Heads, LOUIS of FRANCE (afterwards St. LOUIS); CHARLES of ANJOU, his Brother, King of APULIA and the two SICILIES; HENRY Third, of England; and RICHARD, his Brother, commonly called King of the ROMANS. By the envy of the Barons of PROVENCE, he was afterwards accused to RAYMOND of Peculation; but he showed, by his accounts, that during his Administration the Revenues had been doubled.—He went into voluntary exile, and died a Mendicant.—Under pretence that his Consort's dowry had not been paid, CHARLES of ANJOU made war upon his Father-in-law, drove him from his Country, and confiscated the estates of his Barons, whom he also exiled,——LANDINO. VELLUTELLO,

In

In deep tranquillity, to Heav'n resign'd.  
O had the world but known that noble Soul,  
That o'er Earth's dim face benighted stole,  
New praise his former praise had left behind!"

END OF THE SIXTH CANTO.



## CANTO THE SEVENTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

Conference between BEATRICE and DANTE on the Nature of  
Redemption, and the Immortality of the Soul.

---

“ *HOSANNA to the God of Hosts on high !  
Hosanna to the Sov'reign of the Sky !  
In whose transcendent smile those living fires  
With tenfold lustre beam, intense and clear.*”  
Such were the strains that trembled on my ear,  
As the blest Spirit join'd the heav'nly Choirs.

### II.

With his associates kindling in his course,  
Quick as a driving storm of sparkles soars,  
The fiery squadron vanish'd from my view :  
Tho' burning with desire their state to know,  
The embryo wish was spent in murmurs low ;  
Such deep respect th' attendant Vestal drew.

III.

Soon she began the myſt'ry to reveal,  
 With ſuch a ſmile as tho' profoundeſt Hell  
 Had ſtruck a pauſe, and ſooth'd the STYGIAN band,  
 Tho' plung'd in fierceſt flames. “ You doubt,” ſhe  
 “ How a due act of juſtice can abide [cry'd,  
 The 'venging blow from Retribution's hand !

IV.

“ Soon will I ſolve the doubt ; attentive hear :  
 Truth, Heav'n's prime bounty, ſoon ſhall bleſs your ear ;  
 Created free to chuſe the unborn man,  
 When to his lordly will the reins were giv'n,  
 Turn'd a proud rebel in the face of Heav'n,  
 And led to HADES all the human clan.

*St. iii. l. 5. How a due act, &c.—*] *i. e.* How the Jews could have been puniſhed for the crucifixion of our Saviour, which was an act neceſſary for the Salvation of the World.

*St. iv. l. 6. And led to HADES—*] Here means in general the ſtate of the Dead ; though ſuch is the degeneracy of mankind, that without the aid of Grace (which is purchaſed for ALL by our Saviour, in ſuch a ſenſe as to leave *them* inexcusable that abuſe it), we cannot conjecture how they would be qualified for bleſſedneſs.

Whatever is done, or ſuffered, by an offending perſon, or by another in his ſtead, ſo as to ſatiſfy juſtice, or ſecure the honour of the divine Government, or beſtowing upon the offender pardon and happineſs *on the condition of certain qualifications*, may properly be called a ſatiſfaction, or atonement, made to God for him.

That Chriſt has made ſuch a ſatiſfaction for the Sins of thoſe who repent and turn to God, in the way of ſincere though imperfect obedience, is plain to them who believe the Scriptures ; ſee *Iſa. liii. 5.* —*Mat. xxvi. 38.* That he did it ſpontaneouſly, appears from

V.

“ Deeply they plung’d beneath the deadly shade  
Of mental Night, that her broad wing display’d  
Thro’ many a dark age o’er the slumb’ring Soul ;  
Till from disclosing Heav’n th’ omnific Word,  
With soul-renewing grace their strength restor’d,  
And with new light illum’d the dusky Pole.

VI.

“ Lost Man, to Demon-guidance long resign’d,  
That left each character of Heav’n behind,  
He seiz’d, as, driving down the tide of Time,  
He sail’d before the stream, and form’d anew  
To that first pattern which their Maker drew,  
When first they breath’d in EDEN’s happy clime.

VII.

“ Contemplate him as made by Heav’n’s design ;  
His nature, form, and semblance seem divine :

---

Heb. x. 7. 9. See also Isa. liii. 5, 6. 10. Mat. xx. 28. Rom. iii. 25.—v. 6. 8. 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13. Eph. v. 2. Heb. vii. 27.—ix. 26.—x. 12. 1 Pet. ii. 24.—iii. 18.

See RAPHEL. Annot. in Rom. v. 8.

That they are accepted *in* or *through* him by God ; *i. e.* on account of his vicarious sufferings ; see John, iii. 14. 17. Acts, x. 35, 36. Rom. iv. 25. Col. i. 20, &c. 2 Cor. v. 18. 20. Eph. i. 5. 7. Heb. i. 3.—ix. 14.—x. 4. 14. Rev. i. 5, 6.—v. 9, 10.—viii. 13, 14.

That sincere though imperfect obedience will be accepted, see Phil. iii. 13. James, iii. 1 John, i. 2 John, i. &c. &c.

But

But when from Wisdom's path he chose to stray,  
He left the paths of Bliss, by righteous doom,  
For mental darkness and an early tomb ;  
Self-banish'd from the new and living Day.

VIII.

“ The cruel tortures of the rending steel,  
EMMANUEL's mortal nature chose to feel ;  
That Nature, suff'ring for the marks of Sin  
The hate of Heav'n, to human guilt might show,  
Tho' nought the heav'nly habitant could owe,  
Who lodg'd that earthly tenement within.

IX.

“ Just is Heav'n's purpose, but in MAN 's unjust  
That dreadful doom that sprinkl'd in the dust,

*St. viii. l. 3. That Nature, suff'ring for the marks of Sin ]* The remission of Sins, without any satisfaction at all, would encourage us to think too slightly of the Divine justice ; whereas, by the suffering and death of Christ, great honour is done to it ; and God's abhorrence of Sin (as the Poet observes) is displayed in a very striking light, and has the best tendency to engage those who embrace the Gospel to a life of holy obedience.

It is the peculiar glory of the Gospel that gives such an account of the method whereby Sin may be pardoned, as secures the honour of God's laws, and relieves the Mind from that anxiety which ignorance would occasion. *WHITBY* on John, iii. 16. *TILLOTSON's Works*, vol. i. p. 477, fol. *BUTLER's Analogy*, part ii. c. v. *CLARKE's Sermon*, vol. v. Sermon. 9.

*St. ix. l. 1. Just is Heav'n's purpose, &c. ]* Heaven educes good, in its sovereign Mercy, from the malice of the Jews ; but this is no apology for Sin, that God brings good out of evil ; for that would rest upon the presumption that Providence had no other means



His sacred blood combin'd, by Heav'n's decree,  
 Celestial mercy with Judæan rage ;  
 Heav'n, op'ning, signaliz'd the bloody Stage,  
 That trembling scarce could bear the fatal Tree.

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means to produce good, but through the medium of evil ; which would be a denial of his infinite wisdom, and making him act in subserviency to the wickedness of Man. But he has various means of bringing about his ends ; and when he chuses, as we may say, to *ingraft* them upon moral evil, it proves, among other ends, to give us a very affecting idea both of his wisdom and goodness.—See Preliminary Essay to the PURGATORIO.

Had the JEWS been suddenly and generally converted by our Saviour, and relinquished their bloody design, they would probably have endeavoured to make him a temporal King, and have, for that purpose, rebelled against the ROMANS ; and it would have been this day objected against the Christians, by the enemies of Revelation, that it was a piece of state-policy.—ATTERBURY'S Sermon on Matt. xxvii. 25.

With respect to Christ's dying for all Men, we are assured in Scripture, that God is no respecter of Persons, but in every nation he that worketh righteousness is accepted by him. The merits of his Death extend to those who never heard of his Name. St. Paul, in observing that it is impossible for a great part of mankind to believe in the Gospel, intimates that their unbelief shall not be imputed to them as a fault (Rom. x. 14.) ; he also says, that the Gentiles are a *law* to themselves (Rom. ii. 14.) ; they all have a rule of conduct derived from God ; but the Salvation both of Jews and Gentiles is owing to the merits of Christ, for " there is no other Name given under Heaven by which mankind can be saved."

To real Christians, however, this is still an invaluable privilege. The benefits which the virtuous Heathens will enjoy, cannot be inferred from this to be equal to what Christians who deserve the name shall enjoy : different degrees of happiness may well be conceived in another world, and all purchased by the satisfaction and mediation of Christ.—Bishop of LINCOLN, on the 18th Article of the Church.

X.

“ Thus, tho’ the heav’nly stroke in justice fell,  
Heav’n us’d the raging denizens of Hell  
Her instruments, who, by their malice, drew  
On them, and on their seed, the penal rod ;  
Self-doom’d, but engines in the hand of God  
To work his will, and suffer vengeance due.

XI.

“ But, wand’ring endless still from thought to thought,  
I see your Mind by new dilemmas caught,  
And eager still to loose the mental tie :  
You wonder, tho’ your former doubts be gone,  
Why Heav’n should will, that Heav’n’s immortal Son  
For this ignoble doom should quit the Sky.

XII.

“ Deep, deep conceal’d within th’ abyfs of Light,  
The mystic reason shuns created fight ;  
Except to them whom Love’s eternal ray  
Irradiates all within, and bids extend  
Their eagle faculties, to comprehend  
The secrets of the Sky, with broad survey.

XIII.

“ But how this Truth that numbers vainly scan,  
Exalted far beyond the ken of Man,  
Fulfil its glorious end, may thus appear :  
Love from its source emits a cloudless ray,  
And scatters round that pure meridian day,  
In which those glorious Orbs their voyage steer.

XIV.

“ What from its bounty, by eternal laws,  
Its effence pure without a medium draws,  
Keeps still the first impressiion, bright and pure ;  
Respondent to the glorious stamp above,  
Unalter'd by the various Orbs that move  
In constant change, it stands for ever sure.

XV.

“ With more delight the heav'nly glance surveys  
Those beings that return his brightest rays,  
And in those holy mirrours sees with joy  
An image of himself, intensely bright,  
Reflecting on the awful Source of Light  
The living splendours of th' immortal Eye.

XVI.

“ Of these, the Tribes of Rationals are first  
Distinguish'd, Tribes by heav'nly favour nurs'd ;  
Nor Man the least, while Man to God maintains  
Allegiance due ; but Sin dissolves the tie,  
And hurls him downward from his native Sky,  
When Sin's eclipse the holy semblance stains.

XVII.

“ There never shall the banish'd Mind return,  
Until once more, from that celestial urn,  
His Mind new light imbibes, and fills again  
The deep and deadly vacancy within,  
Left by the defolating pow'r of Sin,  
School'd by long discipline, and purg'd by pain.

*St. xvii. l. 3. His Mind new light imbibes, &c.] That the  
Deity has various means of access to the Minds that he has made,*

XVIII.

“ Degen’rate Man, of ev’ry good bereft,  
Since EDEN first, and happiness, he left,  
    Ne’er can return, unless a pass he find,  
By his own merit, or by pity shown  
By him that fills the sempiternal throne ;  
    No other means by mercy are assign’d.

XIX.

“ Altho’ you could explore, with Angels’ ken,  
In Heav’n’s eternal doom, the fates of Men,  
    Nought could be found for all his follies past  
Due compensation, but an upward flight,  
High as his steepy fall from life and light,  
    By virtue plum’d, to wing th’ empyreal waste.

is agreeable both to Reason and Scripture ; even National Revolutions are ascribed to this cause, Ezra, i. 1. viz. that his secret influence on the Mind gives a turn to many of the most important events relating to particular Persons and Societies.—Religion of Nature, p. 105—107.

It is probable that when a person has gone through the principal difficulties of Faith and Obedience, the powers of Reason will resume their vigour, Grace will operate with more efficacy, and the Mind will receive more engaging views of the advantages and encouragements attending a virtuous course, than another who acts otherwise can do :—*If any one do my will, he will know that the Law is from God.*

In some instances the divine Grace may be irresistible, as in the case of St. PAUL’s Conversion ; but to say that this is always the case, would destroy the liberty of the Will in all those cases, and would leave no room for the exercise of Justice in conferring rewards.

XX.

“ Thus ’rest of purchas’d grace, the Son of clay  
 Could ne’er attain, nor wipe the debt away ;  
 Heav’n only can restore his woeful plight,  
 And light the Lamp of Holiness within,  
 (Day-spring of Heav’n,) thro’ pardon of his Sin,  
 Yet keep for Justice her undoubted right.

XXI.

“ To shew that goodness gives intrinsic worth  
 To ev’ry deed, to teach the Sons of earth  
 How HE esteems the deep and heartfelt glow  
 Of true benevolence ; with awful change  
 He deign’d o’er this sublunar Stage to range,  
 A lonely Pilgrim, doom’d to pain and woe.

XXII.

“ Since radiant PHOEBUS, on his burning throne,  
 Began to course around the radiant zone ;  
 On the vast mundane Stage was ne’er beheld  
 A scene like this, nor e’er will be display’d,  
 Till desolation’s fiery blast shall spread  
 Her flaming billows o’er creation’s field.

XXIII.

“ What love, with wisdom join’d, oh heav’nly Sire !  
 Was thine ; to snatch him from the penal fire !—  
 Without condition, or a price, to pay,  
 Were less benignity, than to bestow  
 Godhead a ransom for a race so low,  
 A God to marshal them to endless day.

XXIV.

“ Justice, by any other mode, had lost  
Her sacred right, if he, who leads the Host  
Of Heav’n, had not, by his unequal’d deed,  
Thus, for a time, from Paradise exil’d  
His Son, and by his death her claims fulfill’d :  
Thus was our Race from condemnation freed.

XXV.

“ Now on a former theme I must return ;  
I see a second doubt your bosom burn :  
Soon shall it clear, and you, like me, shall view  
Things as they are. Yon’ elements around,  
The flame that springs aloft, the solid ground,  
Water and air, thy curious doubts renew.

XXVI.

“ You think these Creatures, if the stamp of Heav’n  
They wear, altho’ in endless circle driv’n  
And mingling as they meet, must ever last,  
By your allowance, uncorrupt and pure,  
From the annihilating stroke secure,  
And still the present shall be like the past.

XXVII.

“ Cherubic splendours and this pure domain,  
The destin’d range of Heav’n’s immortal Train,  
Are Heav’n’s immediate work, quintessence bright ;  
Eternal, incorrupt, with nought within  
To cause decay, like yon’ sublunar scene,  
By secondary means produc’d to light.

XXVIII.

“ These were created, and the Pow’r that rolls  
Yon’ radiant Orbs around the burning Poles,  
(Itself a Creature,) owns that PRIMAL SOURCE;  
Each Animal from its subjected sway  
Its vigour draws, each Plant that drinks the day  
Gains from this Spring its vegetative pow’rs.

XXIX.

“ But Man’s blest’d Spirit, by th’ immediate breath  
Of Heav’n, was rais’d beyond the reach of Death,

*St. xxviii. l. 6. Gains from this Spring—*] He is here supposed to mean what ARISTOTLE calls the ANIMA MUNDI, better known to the Moderns by the name of the Plastic Power. See CUDWORTH’S *Intell. System*, passim.

*St. xxix. l. 1. But Man’s blest’d Spirit, &c.]* That the Soul does not die with the Body, appears highly probable from the following reasons :

It must be immaterial. All we know of matter is, that it is inert, senseless, and lifeless. It may be urged, that matter may have powers we know not of. But to argue against what we know, because there may be something that we know not ; to weigh hypothetical probability against acknowledged certainty ; is not rational. If that which is known may be over-ruled by that which is unknown, no Being not omniscient can arrive at certainty.

Immateriality implies (as appears necessarily) perpetual duration, as a consequence of exemption from all causes of decay. Whatever perishes, is destroyed by the solution of its texture, and separation of its parts ; nor can we conceive, that that which has no parts, and therefore is incapable of solution, can be naturally corrupted, or impaired. *RASSELAS*, vol. ii. chap. xlvii.

With regard to future retribution : As God is JUST, he will take care that the whole of his creatures shall be more or less happy or miserable, according to the degree in which Virtue or Vice prevails in their characters. No such distribution is here made, correspon-

And warm'd by love of Heav'n's immortal Sire :  
Hence we conclude, that, from the bed of dust,  
Heav'n will exalt again each breathing Bust,  
Like the first Pair, by PROMETHEAN fire."

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dent to their characters ; but virtuous Men are often exposed to the greatest distress, while the worst of Men live and die in a series of prosperity. Reason therefore infers a state of future Retribution. Besides, the voice of Conscience perpetually suggests to us, that we are accountable creatures.—See Essay prefixed to the *INFERNO*.

It is a great confirmation of this, that we find the human Mind capable of perpetual improvement. That such a Being should be formed for so short a duration, seems not consonant to divine Wisdom. We are also evidently made for a greater degree of happiness than we can enjoy in our present state ; and there is a strong Desire of immortality possessing our Natures, which is strongest in the most virtuous Minds : and, indeed, the circumstances of such Men in particular, are such in this World, that we can hardly reconcile it to the Divine Goodness, without a future State of Retribution. In other cases, the Desire implies at least a possibility of enjoyment.

Besides, as the lives of Men are continually in the power of themselves and others, if the Soul were mortal, a desperate Villain might immediately deprive the most virtuous Man of his being, and with it, of all further rewards which his Virtue might have expected and received. And such a Person might also, on the same supposition, put a period to all further punishment intended for his own crimes and due to them, by laying violent hands upon himself. The Justice of God would be frustrated, in a great measure, if the Soul were mortal : but as he is omniscient and just, we have no reason to conclude that his Justice can be frustrated ; therefore the Soul is immortal.—See *WATTS's Works*, vol. iv. p. 594.

That the faculties seem impaired sometimes by age and sickness, (which, however, is by no means always the case,) is no proof that the Soul is mortal ; when we consider how much it depends on the functions of the brain, which must be impaired by sickness, &c.

The



The arguments cited above for the Soul's being immortal, implies that its future state will be eternal. Punishment *may* harden Sinners, and cause new crimes, which must induce new punishments, to an indefinite duration; and a repetition of rewards *may* inspire still new exertions of Virtue.—TAYLOR on Deism, p. 149—167. BALGUY's Sermons, vol. i. p. 409, cited in DODDRIDGE's Lectures.

END OF THE SEVENTH CANTO.



## CANTO THE EIGHTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

The Poet ascends from the Planet **MERCURY** to **VENUS**, where he meets with the Spirit of **CHARLES MARTEL**, King of **HUNGARIA**, with whom he discusses the Question, Why virtuous Parents often have degenerate Children ?

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**T**HE Pagan world, immers'd in Error's maze,  
Were wont to fancy that the jocund rays  
Of **CYTHEREA** beam'd illicit love,  
In the third sphere enthron'd : nor her alone  
Ador'd, but fair **DIONE**, and her Son,  
Who had the art **ELIZA**'s Soul to move.

### II.

Her Name they on that wand'ring fire bestow'd,  
That, circling round the bright celestial road,  
**HYPERION** meets, or on his radiant hair  
Enraptur'd looks behind. Amidst its blaze  
We found ourselves o'erwhelm'd in lambent rays,  
Unconscious lighting on the **CYPRIAN** Star.

III.

Sudden the fainted Maid, that led me on,  
 With new-enkindled charms, celestial shone,  
     Caught from the sacred influence waving round ;  
 Then soon I recogniz'd the hallow'd place,  
 Where dancing Visions in a fairy maze  
     New living fires illum'd the radiant bound.

IV.

Distinct, like Sparkles in the rising Flame,  
 Or Meteors in the Sky, they went and came  
     In various measures, gliding quick or slow ;  
 As by the BEATIFIC VISION fir'd,  
 Its changing views their kindling Souls inspir'd,  
     Still varying in incessant ebb or flow.

V.

But never does the Hurricanoe sweep,  
 From black'ning Clouds condens'd, the boiling deep  
     With such a rapid whirl, as broke away  
 In Squadrons from the Choir ; their eagle eyes  
 Took from their elder Brethren of the Skies  
     The welcome signal, like the circling ray.

VI.

The lucid Van of that ELYSIAN Throng,  
 From right to left, with loud HOSANNAS rung,  
     Still seems the sacred sound my sense to thrill ;  
 When from the line advanc'd a jocund Sprite,  
 And thus began : “ Behold the Sons of Light,  
     Happy your utmost pleasure to fulfil.

St. iv.] See Extract from MALEBRANCHE, Pref. p. 2.

VII.

“ Still harmonizing with the holy Choir  
Above, each rising thought, each warm desire,  
With equal energy and kindred glow,  
Inspires the movements of the favour'd Race,  
Still propagated thro' unbounded space,  
Our raptures late your Fancy spy'd below.

VIII.

“ Do you remember when on Earth you sung,  
*Holy Contemplatists, immortal Throng,*  
*You who in beatific vision spy*  
*Your duty, and perform your holy round*  
*With the third Heav'n, and watch thro' space profound*  
*The guiding glory of th' eternal Eye ?*

IX.

“ A love so warm the gen'ral bosom fires,  
'Tis some relief to leave the heav'nly Choirs,  
With the redundancy of joy to fill  
And furnish other Souls.” I turn'd aside,  
With rev'rend look, to my celestial Guide,  
And in his eye perceiv'd th' accordant will.

X.

Then turning to the Ghost, that seem'd to glow  
With new desire the blessing to bestow,

St. viii.] A Poem of DANTE is here alluded to, beginning with  
these words ;

Voi, che' intendendo il terzo cièl movete.

With voice that scarce my inward feelings spoke,  
I ask'd his Name on Earth ; a rising bloom  
Seem'd his cherubic features to illume,  
And a new stamp of Heav'n his features took.

XI.

A ray of transport sparkled in his eye,  
As thus he spoke : “ Beyond yon' nether Sky  
Short space, I saw the Sun ; a longer span  
Had kept aloof the desolating storm  
Which o'er my Country spread unbounded harm,  
Since my unhappy Brother's reign began.

XII.

“ This tide of bliss that thro' my bosom flows,  
A tint EMPYREAL o'er my features throws,  
That hides my old remembrance from your view :  
The glorious mask that o'er my face is spread,  
Makes you forget the years, for ever fled,  
When I, an earthly Man, was lov'd by you.

XIII.

“ Had I surviv'd, my Love, whose early bloom  
Fell immature upon my yawning tomb,

*St. xiii. l. 1. Had I surviv'd, my Love—*] CHARLES MARTEL was eldest Son to CHARLES II., (or the Lame,) King of NAPLES, of the ANGEVIN Line. In his Father's life-time he was called to the kingdom of HUNGARY on a vacancy, as he had a family-claim to that Crown. He died before his Father, who was succeeded in NAPLES and SICILY by his second Son ROBERT, to the exclusion of the Sons of MARTEL, who, according to the rights of primogeniture, ought to have inherited the Throne. (See VILLANI, lib.

With ripe ambrosial fruit your muse had blest ;  
Where RHONE and SORGIA's mingled waters glide  
I thought to reign, but Fate the boon deny'd :  
PROVENCE another rul'd ; you know the rest !—

XIV.

“ BARI GAETA, with CROTONA's bound,  
Where winding TRONTO meets the blue profound,

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lib. viii, ix, and x. and Hist. Flor.) DANTE, it is supposed, had met with CHARLES MARTEL in the Court of his Father, on an embassy he made to NAPLES.

ROBERT, his Successor, the Head of the GUELF Faction, was long engaged in war against the Ghibellines in ITALY, as well as against the house of ARAGON, with various fortune. His Son CHARLES, Duke of CALABRIA, died before his Father, and left two Daughters ; the eldest was afterwards the famous JOAN, Queen of NAPLES, who was betrothed, at nine years old, to her Cousin, ANDREW of HUNGARY, the descendant and heir of CHARLES MARTEL. He, however, proved the object of her aversion. He was assassinated almost in her presence. His Brother, the King of HUNGARY, made war to revenge his death, and compelled the Queen to fly to AVIGNON, which belonged to her as Heiress of PROVENCE, and which she sold to the Pope, to enable her to carry on the war. She married the Prince of TARENTUM ; who was supposed to have been her Paramour in her first Husband's lifetime. The King of HUNGARY being at last tired of this long war, and exhausted by its expence, made some overtures for peace, on condition that JOAN would clear herself, by public trial, of her Husband's murder ; which she contrived to bring to effect, by procuring Witnesses who deposed that she was under the power of *Magic*, and, consequently, only a passive instrument in the affair. This was about the year 1350.—See GIANNONE, Hist. Nap. sub eod. ann. and Hist. Flor.

And VERDI mingles with his kindred main,  
Kind hope already added to my fway ;  
HUNGARIA's sceptre call'd me thence away,  
Where DANUBE leaves behind the GERMAN Train.

XV.

“ Ah ! but for this, SICILIA's hapless shore,  
Oft by TARTAREAN darkness cover'd o'er  
By MANGIBELL's dark fume, (where TYPHON lay  
In tortures deep, as fabling Poets sing,)  
Beneath my CARLO's and RODOLPHO's wing,  
Long, long had blest'd our Line's more gentle fway.

XVI.

“ When he, that with an arm of steel subdu'd  
ÆTNA's indignant Tribes, had never view'd  
The rising tempest, by Sedition blown,  
Almost as loud as when PALERMO flew  
To arms, and Vengeance on the GALLIC Crew  
Cry'd with a thund'ring voice, “ Fall on, fall on !”

XVII.

“ If my lost Brother had foreseen his fate,  
No CATALONIAN Plund'rer of the State

*St. xvi. l. 4. —when PALERMO flew]* The famous SICILIAN VESPERs, when the Inhabitants of MESSINA and PALERMO in SICILY, in an insurrection, massacred all the FRENCH on the Island ; provoked by some recent injuries, and the general character of the Lieutenants of CHARLES of ANJOU.—VILLANI, lib. vii. c. 61. Vid. Hist. Flor.

*St. xvii. l. 1. If my lost Brother—]* CHARLES the Second of NAPLES, the Father of MARTEL and ROBERT, on a Peace made with



His sanction had abus'd, but fled his wrath;  
With better vigilance the Barque of State  
He should have watch'd, nor let a double freight  
Sink the proud vessel in the waves beneath.

XVIII.

“ Alas, the Day! my Brother's niggard heart  
Needed some confident, with gen'rous art,  
To melt his native penury of Soul,  
And loose the rigour of his iron hands,  
Long felt so heavy by SICILIA's Bands,  
Pressing from weary Swains the scanty dole.”

XIX.

“ From you,” I said, “ I feel the transport flow,  
From the prime Source reflected here below,  
Where all collected joys commence and end;  
Him you behold, as you by me are seen,  
Communicated glories in your mien  
Appear, and on my ravish'd Soul descend.

with the King of ARAGON, was obliged to send his Son ROBERT as Hostage, who was kept in a kind of honourable captivity in CATALONIA. He contracted such a friendship for some of them, that when he came to the throne, he invited them to NAPLES. His kindness to them being looked upon with an envious eye by the Natives, gave occasion to much obloquy; possibly not merited by the munificent Friend of PETRARCH.—See his Memoirs.

St. xviii. *Alas, the Day!*—] We are to observe, that the Monarch and the Poet were of opposite Parties.

XX.

“ This doubles ev’ry joy, and yet I feel  
Somewhat of pain, for still a cloudy veil  
Hangs o’er your words ; for yet I want to know,  
How can a vile degen’rate brood disgrace  
A noble Stem, and all its worth embase.”  
Thus I. The Shade reply’d, with placid brow

XXI.

“ If I one truth disclose, the unseen Light  
That seems behind you now to set in Night,  
Shall dawn all-glorious, and relume your Soul ;  
That sov’reign Good that turns the rolling Sphere  
Thro’ which you journey, makes his Pow’r appear  
In these proud Orbs that wheel around the Pole.

XXII.

“ Their preservation, and their future doom,  
Both in the passing Day and that to come,  
Where all appears arrang’d by Art divine,  
CHANCE then would manage ; which can ne’er befall  
This World, unless the Pow’r that governs all  
Should fail, and Angel-hands their charge resign.

XXIII.

“ Say, do you wish to see the truth more near ?”  
“ No,” I reply’d ; “ I see distinct and clear,

*St. xxi. l. 3. Shall dawn all-glorious,]* Here commences the answer of MARTEL to DANTE’s question, viz. How virtuous Fathers could have degenerate Sons ?

That Nature cannot ever miss its aim."

" Say, were it worse," he cry'd, " for Man to lead  
An independent life, if Fate decreed,  
Or mutual aid at once to give and claim."

XXIV.

" This no discussion needs," I quick reply'd ;  
" How could his various wants be well supply'd,  
Unless, with different talents each endow'd,  
Each stage of gen'ral life were taught to fill ?  
For this, and this alone, with plastic skill  
Man first was made, as PLATO's Rival show'd.

XXV.

" Your Reason thence the fair conclusion draws,  
That various habitudes, by Nature's laws,  
To ev'ry dawning intellect is giv'n :  
Hence SOLON calmly plans the public good,  
And XERXES dyes the billowy main with blood,  
And SALEM's Priest explain'd the Will of Heav'n.

XXVI.

" Hence DÆDALUS explor'd th' ærial dome,  
And taught his Son on daring wing to roam  
The desert Sky, 'till Ocean caught his fall.  
'Tis thus that mighty CLOTHA spins their doom,  
And stamps their future bias in the womb,  
Indifferent to the palace or the stall.

St. xxv. l. 6. PLATO's *Rival*] ARISTOTLE. See his *Ethics*  
and *Politics*, as abridged by the Abbé BARTELEMI.

## XXVII.

“ Thence JACOB mourn’d the discord of his race,  
 And young QUIRINUS from a stem so base  
 Was born, that MARS his Father’s name supply’d :  
 The Father, like the Son, would still be seen ;  
 But here celestial Wisdom steps between,  
 And to new moulds directs the living tide.

## XXVIII.

“ Thus shines the truth like the meridian Sky,  
 Which late receded from your mental eye,  
 Fast vanishing from sight ; but now the glow  
 Of Charity impels me to improve  
 Those moments granted, if eternal Love  
 Prepare your Mind another truth to know.

*St. xxviii. l. 1. Thus shines the truth — ]* The connection of the argument seems to be, that as the heavenly Bodies, by their various powers, &c. have an influence on each other, and support the whole system ; so the various talents and characters of Men preserve the harmony of Society.—The concluding apostrophe (*St. xxx.*) relates to what has been a topic of declamation among Moralists for many ages ; yet, probably, every class of Men requires sometimes a new infusion of energy from them, who at first sight appeared totally unfit for the department into which they had entered ; else each class, condemned to the same pursuits and habitudes, would probably degenerate, as is the case with the INDIAN Casts, where every one follows the profession of his Father: for instance, if those selected for the clerical order were such only whose talents were merely clerical, the privileges and immunities of the Church, and much of its respectability, would not long subsist in the contest with its open and secret enemies. This observation will apply as well to the private concerns of each individual, as to the interest of public bodies.

XXIX.

“ Nature, when Fortune thwarts her kind intent,  
From her primæval bias rudely bent,  
The sad disturbance in th’ effect displays ;  
Were its own bias by each class pursu’d,  
(Often by Pride, by Folly oft withstood,)  
No ill-starr’d Man would e’er his rank disgrace.

XXX.

“ The fiery Genius to the cowl you doom ;  
You tear the Student from the cloyster’s gloom,  
In camps to shudder at the clarion’s found ;  
The Cleric Head you circle with a crown,  
Who with the Pastor’s staff might gain renown,  
And tread in Error’s maze an endless round.”

END OF THE EIGHTH CANTO.



CANTO THE NINTH.

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ARGUMENT.

The Poet still continues in VENUS, where he meets with several Spirits, and hears some Predictions relative to ITALY.

---

WHEN thy great Sire, fair CLEMENTINA, told  
The deep difasters of his line of old,  
Frauds to ensue, the Spirit next display'd :  
“ Roll on, ye Orbs,” he cry'd ; “ the Time will come  
To recompence their ills with equal doom,  
With deep complaints their losses shall be paid.”

II.

He spoke; and, turning to the Source of Light,  
Bent thro' vacuity his ravish'd sight,  
Drinking the rays of inexpressive joy,  
From that eternal and redundant beam,  
Ever descending in a lucid stream,  
Pervading all with ever-new supply.

St. i. l. i. —*fair CLEMENTINA*] Daughter of MARTEL, and  
married to LOUIS X. King of FRANCE.

III.

Deluded Souls ! what low degen'rate gust  
Compels you thus to mingle with the dust,  
And, with prone intellects, to seek in Night  
That good which shines above ? another Soul  
Came on, like light'ning glancing from the Pole,  
And fix'd on me his eyes serenely bright.

IV.

The Seraph's glowing visage seem'd to melt  
With ardour, to dispense the joy he felt ;  
Calmly, with steadfast look, he ey'd me still :  
To the celestial Fair, devoid of dread,  
I turn'd ; and in her gentle aspect read  
The kind permission of the heav'nly Will.

V.

“ O quench the longing thirst with which I burn,  
Bless'd Soul ! ” I cry'd, “ and let the Light return,  
That shows the inmost secrets of my Mind  
From me to thee.” Th' abyss of Light profound,  
In which he seem'd to glow in transport drown'd,  
He left, and came impell'd by Love refin'd.

VI.

“ A breezy Hill its sunny brow displays,  
Where BRENTA with PIAVA's liquid maze  
To the RIALTO's brine their way pursue ;  
There was I born, and hence a fullen flame,  
My Brother, to these shores a dreadful name,  
Deep kindling, like a STYGIAN vapour drew.

*St. vi. l. 4. There was I born—*] CUNIZZA, Sister to the famous EZZELINO, Tyrant of the MARIA TRIVEGIANA. See *INFERNO*, Canto xii. Notes.



VII.

“ Here, from terrestrial mixture clear, I shine ;  
My Passions all absorb’d in Love divine,  
To transient objects long, too long enur’d,  
This Planet rose, ascendant at my birth,  
But now refin’d above the scenes of Earth,  
My happiness for ever is secur’d.

VIII.

“ The dark remembrance of my fault no more  
Engenders pain on this delightful shore,  
A tract from vulgar Souls sequester’d far ;  
That sparkling Form upon my left survey,  
’Tis FOLIO doom’d to wear the Poets’ bay,  
Five hundred circles of the solar Star.

IX.

“ Think what incitements call to purchase Fame,  
When like the PHOENIX from her fun’ral flame,  
A second life, when your material bust,  
Sunk to the soil, shall from the mould arise.—  
But dumb are all the warnings of the Skies,  
To PADUA’s Sons, still prostrate in the dust.

X.

“ On the devoted Crew shall fall in vain  
The scourge of War, tho’ winding to the main

*St. viii. l. 5. ’Tis FOLIO — ] A famous Troubadour.*

VICENZA's troubled flood with slaughter swell ;  
See where CAGNANO joins with SILE's tide,  
Yon' Demon fills RICARDO's heart with pride—  
His brother Demons spread the net of Hell.

XI.

“ Sad FELTRO's plains the perfidy shall rue  
Of her vile Priest ; for never captive Crew  
Were by so false and faithless vows beguil'd ;  
Felons, for many a less enormous deed,  
For many a Moon to bondage were decreed,  
In MALTA's gloomy hold from light exil'd.

XII.

“ Their blood will call to Heav'n, and there be weigh'd  
In her eternal scale, and shall be paid  
To the last drop, which, with a lib'ral hand,  
This courteous Prelate on th' Apostle's Heir  
Bestow'd : The PADUANS ne'er are known to spare,  
When Av'rice and Revenge such gifts demand.

XIII.

“ The dreadful Pageants of impending doom,  
Ascending retrograde from Times to come,

*St. x. l. 3. VICENZA*] Near which the PADUANS marching to surprise the city under the conduct of JACOPO DE CARRARA, were met and defeated by CANE DE LA SCALA, Lord of VERONA.

*St. xi. l. 1. Sad FELTRO* —] The Bishop of this place, when he had given an asylum to some Ghibelline Refugees of FERRARA, then at variance with the Pope, resigned them to the Governor of FERRARA (who was of the GUELF or Papal Faction), for a sum of money. The Bishop was a native of PADUA.—LANDINO. VEL-  
LUTELLO.

Meet in the Mirror of eternal Right  
Above ; and, on our eyes reflected, fall  
From the wide dome of yon' etherial Hall—  
You need not wonder at our inward Light."

XIV.

Here ceas'd th' illumin'd Soul, and turn'd away,  
Where, in a running maze, the Sons of Day  
In inexpressive dance and song combin'd ;  
Emerging soon from that distinguish'd Crew,  
Another gliding glory met my view,  
Fill'd with th' effulgence of th' eternal Mind.

XV.

The brightest opal when it meets the Sun,  
And with keen glance returns the beam of Noon,  
Was dim and dusky to the smile that play'd  
On his celestial face. Thus Angels show  
Increase of transport, while the Sons of Woe  
Tell their deep tortures by another Shade.

XVI.

" Heav'n's transcendent Light that all reveals  
You stand, no envious Cloud the truth conceals."  
" Why silent then, thou Son of Song," I cry'd ;  
" Thy voice might warble with the heav'nly strain,  
For ever chanted in th' empyreal fane,  
Where flaming Seraphims the chorus guide.

XVII.

" Could I the secrets of thy Soul divine,  
With equal ease as thou can't fathom mine,

My suit were needless." Soon the Bard reply'd,  
 " Those waves thou know'st, that from th' ATLANTIC  
 Till the low line that marks the rising Sun [run,  
 His flaming disk at Noon is seen to ride.

XVIII.

" Upon its verge, where MACRA meets the main,  
 And winding EBRO leads its liquid train,  
 Parting LIGURIA from the TUSCAN lands,  
 I saw the Light. The BUGIAN Beach afar,  
 At the same moment sees the rising Star  
 Of Day, when he forfakes HESPERIA's strand.

XIX.

" Then, where the moony Squadrons won the Day,  
 And GENOA's warlike Files in slaughter lay,  
 I liv'd, by FOLIO's name-distinguish'd song ;  
 A lamp I seem'd by CYTHEREA fir'd,  
 Her influence bland the kindling Muse inspir'd,  
 And mark'd me down the Slave of Love and Song.

XX.

" Not fair ELIZA felt a fiercer flame,  
 False to SICHÆUS and the TROJAN Dame,  
 Than I, while fervid youth a sanction gave ;  
 Nor lovely PHILLIS by the GREEK beguil'd,  
 Nor great ALCIDES, when the winged Child  
 Left him to beauteous IOLE a Slave.

*St. xvii. l. 4. Those waves—*] The MEDITERRANEAN sea, described here by astronomical marks, it being Noon in PALESTINE at its eastern extremity, when it is Sun-rise at the Straits of GIBRALTAR ; the place here meant is the territory of GENOA.

XXI.

“ Yet on the confines of this happy shore  
 Gay Transport reigns ; Repentance is no more :  
 Such is the joy in that supernal fway,  
 That heav’n-ward turns the wand’rings of our Will ;  
 Here we admire, and love that heav’nly skill,  
 That all our STYGIAN dregs refines away.

XXII.

“ Our dark Desires, to earthly objects prone,  
 Here prune the wing, and to th’ eternal Throne  
 Soar like an Eagle thro’ the flood of Day.  
 Would you participate the glorious flame,  
 Observe that Angel ! her illustrious Name  
 Will meet you like the wave-reflected ray.

XXIII.

“ RAHAB, in holy contemplation there,  
 On Love’s first object in th’ empyreal sphere,  
 Fixes her cherub eye : In years of yore,  
 From yonder world, that sends her pointed shade  
 So far, in fiery pomp to Heav’n convey’d,  
 She took her station on the blissful shore.

XXIV.

“ Well did the glorious lot her Faith reward,  
 And justly HE who Hell’s strong gates unbarr’d,

*St. xxiii. l. 1. RAHAB,]* See her Story, Joshua, ii. The Poet feigns that she was brought from the LIMBUS PATRUM, and left in the Planet VENUS. The original word, translated HARLOT, signifies an Hostess, or the Keeper of a Caravansera.—See Extract from PLATO’s Symposium, Pref. p. 2.

Left such a witness of his conquest here  
 'Mongst our selected Tribes : she saw the hand  
 Of heav'nly Vengeance doom her native land,  
 And join'd the sacred Host with filial fear.

XXV.

Thrice hallow'd shores ! I mourn your wayward fate;  
 How he that rules the Apostolic State  
 Forgets your wrongs, let weeping ARNO tell.  
 ARNO—for there the first Apostate drew,  
 From climes below, his heav'n-abandon'd Crew,  
 And coloniz'd her trembling shores from Hell.

XXVI.

Here MAMMON built his forge, and thence around  
 Scatters his min'ral plagues thro' holy ground,  
 That makes the careless Pastor leave his Sheep  
 At random in the wild ; the sacred Lore  
 Of JESUS he forsakes for sordid ore,  
 Taught by the Papal law to gain and keep.

XXVII.

“ On this the holy Conclave bend their eyes,  
 And the 'lorn Hills of NAZARETH despise ;

*St. xxv. l. 3. ARNO —* The FLORINS, at that time a current  
 Coin through all EUROPE, which were first struck at FLORENCE,  
 are here introduced by the Poet as the general Representative  
 of Wealth, the cause of Avarice, and the bane of Public  
 Spirit.

Tho' fann'd by Angel's wings ! majestic ROME,  
Where Martyrs old, by holy CEPHAS led,  
With him yet slumber on thy stony bed;  
Soon shall you see the rank Adult'rer's doom."

St. xxvii. l. 4. —*holy CEPHAS*] St. PETER, supposed the first Bishop of ROME.

St. xxvii. l. 6. —*the rank Adulterer*] BONIFACE the Eighth, according to most of the Commentators.

END OF THE NINTH CANTO.





## CANTO THE TENTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

Description of the Order of the Universe.—Ascent to the Sun.—  
Conference with the Spirit of AQUINAS.

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ETERNAL WISDOM and eternal LOVE,  
Join'd with interminable POWER above,  
Union ineffable, in bliss supreme,  
Gave to Existence this stupendous whole,  
Where'er the eye can reach, or soaring Soul  
Extends around its intellectual beam,

### II.

Unrivall'd Order and celestial Grace,  
Seen thro' the stages of unbounded Space,  
Whene'er the mental eye, with steady view,  
Surveys its glory, to the heav'nly King  
Lifts the rapt Soul on Contemplation's wing,  
And ev'ry Pow'r expands with rapture new.

III.

Now ye that hear the heav'nly Muse's voice,  
Pursue her journey thro' the op'ning Skies,  
Where the first Motion wheels her mighty round,  
And whirls the Planets with resistless sway;  
Then think of Him whose Power yon' Orbs obey,  
In self-enjoyment wrapt, and bliss profound.

IV.

Behold yon' shining Path obliquely run,  
Where, with his glorious retinue, the Sun  
Marshals the Seasons, and conducts the Year;  
What wisdom in the Pow'r that taught his ray  
To warm the subject World with temper'd Day,  
Not coldly distant, nor oppressive near.

V.

Had any other circuit been assign'd  
For this ætherial cavalcade to wind,  
In frost to slumber, or to sink in fire,  
Had been the lot of all sublunar things:  
Here Contemplation rests her weary wings,  
And stops awhile to tremble and admire.

VI.

Indulge this holy prelibation first,  
That your ripe Mind, in holy habits nurs'd,

*St. iv. l. 1. Behold yon' shining Path—*] The Ecliptic, or Path  
of the Sun, whose obliquity or declination from the Equator is  
the cause of the change of Seasons.

May scorn that earthy fume that damps the Soul,  
And brings it down from its ætherial flight :  
For thy behoof I range the fields of Light,  
Culling the fruits of Heav'n from Pole to Pole.

VII.

Nature's great Herald now, whose eye afar  
Celestial influence sheds from Star to Star,  
And measures Time in his diurnal race,  
Had reach'd the welcome stage, that calls the Light  
Of PHOSPHOR soonest from the womb of Night,  
To drive the vapours from AURORA's face.

VIII.

Bright Regent of the planetary Train,  
How I was wafted to thy high domain  
Is all mysterious as the source of Thought ;  
For quick as Thought, from World to World I flew :  
There, oh ! what splendours flash'd upon my view,  
When my celestial Guide my notice caught.

IX.

Transfiguration in a moment came,  
Distinct she stood within the Solar flame,  
Light within Light ! but more resplendent far :  
No radiant change of lifted colours gay  
Was there, no painting with illusive ray  
Her matchless Form that feeble aid could spare.

X.

Let Intellect, Experience, Art, combine,  
Vain were their pow'r to paint that scene divine ;

Even Faith, with Angel ken, would scarce suffice ;  
That Fancy's plumage fails to mount the height  
Is no surprize ; for who can bear the fight  
When SOL with double lustre fires the Skies ?

XI.

Such was th' appearance of the heav'nly Band,  
Who in the sunny region took their stand,  
Wonders of Wisdom ! Miracles of Love !  
For ever singing in alternate lays  
'To Him, who cheers with ever-vital rays  
The glorious circle of the Saints above.

XII.

" To this material Source of Life and Light,  
His pow'r," my Leader cry'd, " has wing'd your flight :  
Never did Mortal feel so deep a glow  
Of filial love, commix'd with filial fear :  
Heav'n's dome, the radiant Nymph, the Solar Sphere,  
Seem'd all to vanish, like a passing show.

XIII.

But inly vex'd to see my seeming scorn,  
She smil'd benignant, like the rosy Morn ;  
Her smile recall'd me from my rapt'rous trance ;  
Sudden the cope of Heav'n salutes my sight,  
The glories darting round the Squadrons bright,  
Call'd to existence by her magic glance.

XIV.

Disbanding soon, the Files, with splendour crown'd,  
In one wide-waving glory hemm'd us round ;

Their gen'ral chorus charm'd the list'ning ear :  
 Our optics less enjoy'd the double Noon,  
 Form'd like an halo bending round the Moon,  
 When a thin vapour veils her shining sphere.

XV.

Unnumber'd are the mystic wonders known  
 On this high foot-stool of the burning Throne ;  
 No mortal strain the tenour can convey  
 Of that loud hymn that round the Concave rung :  
 The Man who wants to learn the lofty song,  
 Must mount on wings of fire the Milky Way.

XVI.

As well might thoughtless Mortals hope to hear,  
 From Mutes, the music of the Solar Sphere,  
 Whose long-drawn modulation seem'd to ring  
 From the bright Squadrons in a triple round,  
 As in full march they pac'd the Solar bound,  
 Chanting the glories of their heav'nly King.

XVII.

Like Stars that circle round the steadfast Pole,  
 For ever pointing to their radiant Goal,  
 These living Suns, reflecting blaze on blaze,  
 Mov'd on, or paus'd, as in a festive hall  
 Gay Nymphs, that tend the Music's dying fall,  
 Suspend their step, or thrid the sportive maze.

XVIII.

Then, as the heav'nly anthem seem'd to rest,  
 A still small Voice my ravish'd ears address'd :

“ Since Grace, the gentle Nurse of Love divine,  
That knows its object, and expands its flame,  
Inspires your Soul, the deep ascent to claim ;  
O, mortal Man ! immortal bliss is thine !

XIX.

“ None here can to thy thirsty Soul deny  
Fair TRUTH’s nectareous draught, a rich supply ;  
No more than to the main the wint’ry flood  
Can stop adown the slope his swift career ;  
Then, if you wish to know our fortunes here,  
You soon shall fate your Mind with mental food.

XX.

“ You long these Flow’rs of Paradise to know,  
Who yon’ fair Nymph surround in vernal blow,  
Who prunes your wing-empyrean heights to soar :  
I, when on Earth, to fage DOMINGO’s fold  
Belong’d, in pure Religion’s age of gold,  
Ere foul Corruption spoil’d EMMANUEL’s lore.

XXI.

“ This bright and Morning Star that shines beside,  
Is great ALBERTO, erst my sapient Guide ;  
Far-fam’d AQUINUM gave me birth and name :  
If you desire of other Names to hear,  
Follow my voice, and mingle in the rear,  
And as they pass, accost the Sons of Fame.

*St. xx. l. 5. —DOMINGO’s fold]* The celebrated AQUINAS was a DOMINICAN Friar.

*St. xxi. l. 2. Is great ALBERTO—]* ALBERTUS MAGNUS, a voluminous School Divine ; the Tutor of AQUINAS.

XXII.

“ That orient smile, like PHOSPHOR’s rising ray,  
 Marks where fam’d GRATIAN treads the walks of Day,  
     The glory of the Bar, the Temple’s pride:  
 Nor less illustrious is his rank above,  
 Nor less conspicuous in the bands of Love,  
     The fam’d LOMBARDO marches side by side.

XXIII.

“ He humbly, as the Widow’s mite was giv’n,  
 Offer’d his treasures to the stores of Heav’n:  
     But mark the fifth, how far he sheds around  
 His sunny rays, and kindles half the Skies;  
 ’Tis DAVID’s Heir, the wisest of the wife,  
     Of whose last state such doubts on Earth abound.

XXIV.

“ So wide, so clear his intellectual view,  
 None second to his fame the Nations knew  
     (If credit may be giv’n to ancient fables).  
 The sage ATHENIAN next illumines the Train,  
 Who spy’d the secrets of the heav’nly reign,  
     Th’ angelic ranks, their habitudes and laws.

St. xxii. l. 2. —*fam’d GRATIAN*] The Compiler of the Decretals.

St. xxii. l. 6. *The fam’d LOMBARDO*—] PETRUS LOMBAR-  
 DUS, a Divine; commonly called “ the MASTER of the SEN-  
 TENCES.” The MITE that he offered, was an enormous *Folio*,  
 now among the cobwebs of DUCK Lane.

St. xxiii. l. 5. *’Tis DAVID’s Heir*—] SOLOMON.

St. xxiv. l. 4. *The sage ATHENIAN*—] DIONYSIUS, the ARZO-  
 PAGITE; supposed to be the Author of a Book on the Angelic  
 Hierarchies, still extant.

XXV.

“ Behind the good OROSIUS twinkles far,  
As near a Planet, an inferior Star;  
Yet he, no feeble Champion of the Faith,  
The weapons of his warfare lent of yore  
To AUSTIN, fam’d for Theologic lore;  
AUSTIN, who justly earn’d a nobler wreath.

XXVI.

“ If you have mark’d my words, and cast your eyes  
Regardful on the Tenants of the Skies;  
If you desire, by just degrees, to climb  
In search of Sov’reign Good, that Hero know,  
Who taught the World’s attractions to forego,  
And by Eternity to conquer Time.

XXVII.

“ CIELDAURO saw him number’d with the Dead,  
When from his bloody corse the Spirit fled,  
And from the storm below to endless peace  
Hither the tempest-beaten Wand’rer came,  
From his long exile call’d, on wheels of flame,  
Where palms for holy Martyrs Heav’n decrees.

St. xxv. l. 1. —*good OROSIUS*] He wrote an historical Work in defence of revealed Religion; which he dedicated to St. AUGUSTINE, who was his contemporary.

St. xxvi. l. 4. —*that Hero*] BOETHIUS, the Author of the celebrated treatise *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*. He was put to death by THEODORIC, King of the GOTHs, for an unsuccessful attempt to assert the privileges of the ROMAN Senate.—GIBSON’S Hist. vol. vii. p. 46. octavo edit.



XXVIII.

“ Like three fair Stars, that gild the face of Night,  
**RICCARDO**, **BEDE**, and **ISIDORE**, unite :  
 The first a giant Spirit, far above  
 The pitch of common men : The next, behold,  
 Is he who burn’d to join **EMMANUEL**’s Fold,  
 And deem’d the stroke of Death a wound of Love.

XXIX.

“ **SIGGIERO** next is seen, for depth of thought  
 Renown’d : the reas’ning art he nobly taught  
 To **GALLIA**’s Youth, on fam’d **SEQUANA**’s shore ;  
 He gave his treasures to a thankless Age,  
 The World repaid with deep malignant rage  
 The mighty Master of **ZENONIAN** lore.”

XXX.

He ceas’d, like solemn chimes at noon of Night,  
 That call the Spouse of God her Faith to plight,  
 And love for love, with fervent heart, return ;  
 When found to sound responsive vibrates clear,  
 And falls so sweetly on the Vestal’s ear,  
 She feels her heart with holy ardour burn.

**St. xxviii. l. 2. RICCARDO**] **DI SANTA VITTERO**, Brother to the celebrated Writer **HUGO**, of the same name ; a great adept in mystical theology.—*Natales Alexander Hist. Eccles.* cited by **ANGELLUCI**, sect. xi. & xii.

**BEDE**] Known by the name of the **VENERABLE BEDE**, one of the first Writers of **ENGLISH Ecclesiastical History**.

**ISIDORE**] Bishop of **SEVILLE** in **SPAIN**, a celebrated Author in the Middle Ages.

**St. xxx. l. 2. —Spouse of God**] The Nuns called up to Matins by the Bell.

XXXI.

Thus seem'd the holy Jubilee to move,  
While, from the circling Train, the Song of Love,  
In many a sweet division, rung around  
Ineffable, beyond created skill;  
Save, where the fount of Inspiration still  
Gives mental vigour for the theme profound.

END OF THE TENTH CANTO.

## CANTO THE ELEVENTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

The Spirit of St. THOMAS pronounces the Panegyric of  
St. FRANCIS.

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“ **INSENSATE** cares of Man ! what poor pretence  
Allures you downward to the vale of Sense,  
To beat the wing around her meteor joys ?  
Some to the leches’ toil, or noisy bar ;  
Some to the sacerdotal stole repair ;  
Or gain by force or fraud the Victor’s prize.

### II.

“ Some gain by pillage, some by civil strife,  
Some in voluptuous dream consume their life,  
And some in formless sloth their beings spend :  
O ! from this Dungeon of sublunar cares,  
How blest was I, amid the Host of Stars,  
With my celestial Pilot to ascend !”

## III.

A gen'ral pause ensu'd, and stop'd the dance,  
 And all stood silent in extatic trance,  
     Like stationary lamps ; that sacred Light  
 From which before I heard the silver sound,  
 A gleam of double glory cast around,  
     And thus again began the Vision bright :

## IV.

“ Glanc'd from th' eternal Mirroure on my eye,  
 By HIM, whose mighty hand revolves the Sky,  
     Each image, as it dawns within your Mind,  
 I read : you wish to find my meaning clear,  
 In language suited to a mortal ear,  
     Still for your apprehension too refin'd.

*St. iv. l. 1. Glanc'd from th' eternal Mirroure, &c. ]* DANTE is described as having doubts on his Mind, how he could reconcile what St. THOMAS had asserted with regard to ALBERTUS MAGNUS, viz. that he taught the true Wisdom, with his declaration that SOLOMON was the wisest Man. This question he does not immediately solve, but prepares for it, by pointing out the true way, (according to his conception of attaining Heaven by Wisdom,) by following the example of St. FRANCIS D'ASSISI. It is easily perceived what part of his Poem DANTE wrote in a Monastery.

That the Mendicant Orders in their first institution were of considerable use in preserving the spirit of Religion among the people in these dark and disastrous ages, is at least highly probable ; and with regard to the other Monastic foundations, it is well known of what advantage they were to the cause of learning, by preserving its remains during this ungenial season.

V.

“ I prais’d the influence of my Master’s lore,  
 (If not abus’d) due wisdom to restore :  
 Yet, when my word pourtray’d the sapient Man,  
 Him peerless I pronounc’d thro’ every clime ;  
 Here Reason must revolve the truth sublime,  
 And with distinction due the meaning scan.

VI.

“ The Mind that tries in Wisdom’s sea profound,  
 With mutilated line her depths to sound,  
 Feels its defect. ’Tis this inspires the Soul  
 With ardent longing for her Spoufals high,  
 To him who brought with agonizing cry  
 His bloody ransom from the STYGIAN Pool.

VII.

‘ In full security to wing her way  
 (Confiding in her help) to endless Day,  
 An holy Guide he gives on either hand,  
 Thro’ yonder Stars to steer her lofty flight,  
 Warm Charity, and Wisdom’s heav’nly light,  
 In mortal shapes to lead the favour’d Band.

VIII.

“ One I will paint at large—Let one suffice ;  
 For these twin Heralds of the bounteous Skies,  
 (For sister virtues claim an equal praise,)  
 In heav’nly concord, with propitious gale,  
 They steer’d to Heav’n with consentaneous sail,  
 Thro’ Sin’s deep shade, and Life’s perplexing maze.

IX.

“ Between TUPINO and UBALDO’s stream,  
A rising Hill salutes the morning beam ;  
From this PERUGIA feels the Summer glow  
Reflected full, and hence the vapours spread  
A dim tiara round his sinking head,  
When Winter hoards his magazine of snow.

X.

“ Before, they feel the fierce solstitial gleam ;  
Behind, NOIERA vex’d with fierce extreme  
Of tyranny, and hapless GUALDO mourn ;  
Where this rich valley winds with sudden sweep,  
Rising, like SOL, from TAPROBANA’s deep,  
The luminary of our age was born.

XI.

“ To mortals known, ASSISI was its name ;  
But well that celebrated vale may claim  
The title of the EAST, from whence the SUN  
Of WISDOM seem’d to shed his light around ;  
Ev’n his first years, with blushing honours crown’d,  
With auguries of deathless fame begun.

XII.

“ While yet a child, his nascent virtues shed  
Peculiar glories round his infant head,

*St. x. l. 2, 3. NOIERA — GUALDO*] Two towns near the valley  
of ASSISI, which have been usurped and much oppressed by  
their neighbours, the PERUGIANS.

*St. xii. l. 1. While yet a child —*] FRANCIS was a noted Saint of  
the Romish Church, and Founder of one of the Mendicant Orders.

He

And renovated Nature seem'd to feel  
A second Spring, by his example warm'd ;  
Pale Poverty with dow'rless beauty charm'd  
His soaring soul, and fill'd with sacred zeal.

XIII.

“ With joy he follow'd her imperious call,  
Tho', like the King of Terrors, shun'd by all,  
And tho' forbidden by his angry Sire :  
The harbingers of Heav'n with holy awe,  
And the full courts above their Spousals saw,  
While Hymeneals rung around the choir.

XIV.

“ Still more and more, his ardent passion grew  
For Her, who, since the NAZARENE withdrew

He was born at Assisi, about the year 1181. His Father was a Merchant, whose profession he followed till the year 1206, when, being strongly moved by the precepts of the Gospel, he renounced the World, and gave himself up to solitude and mortification.—His Father imprisoned him, in order to cure him of this frenzy, as he esteemed it. He brought him before the Bishop of ASSISI, where he renounced his paternal estate. He drew up an Institute for religious Persons, which the Pope approved. M. FERRAND says, that his Father had defrauded him of a considerable Sum of Money, and that he brought his Son before the Bishop of ASSISI to induce him to renounce his Estate ; but that his Son exceeded his expectations, for he actually stripped off his clothes, and thus addressed himself to his Father : “ Hitherto I have called you my Father on *Earth*,” but now I may certainly say, “ *Our Father which art in Heaven*,” since I have put all my trust and confidence in him.—FERRAND, *Reponse a l'Apologie pour la Reformation*, BAYLE Dict. ART. FRANCIS.

St. xiv. l. 2. “ *For Her*—] i. e. POVERTY,

Without a second Spouse, devoutly stray'd,  
While nigh twelve centuries the weary Sun  
His annual journey thro' the Stars had run,  
Since MARY'S Son espous'd the wand'ring Maid,

XV.

" Weak was her plea, that to AMYCLA'S join'd,  
True Freedom she bestow'd, and Peace of Mind ;  
While the World's Sov'reign wonder'd to behold  
His Soul's calm sunshine none her charms desir'd ;  
Tho' she, when all EMMANUEL'S friends retir'd,  
Was seen, reclining on his bosom cold,

XVI.

" But that my thoughts no longer may be drest  
In darksome Allegory's figur'd vest,  
This wond'rous Man, to Poverty resign'd,  
Attracted ev'ry eye, and shed afar  
His holy influence, like a genial Star,  
And many a Soul to piety inclin'd."

*St. xv. l. 1. Weak was her plea, &c. ]* The Poet speaks still of Poverty, who, though she conferred not only Freedom but Peace of Mind, was yet dreaded and shunned by all. AMYCLAS was a fisherman, in whose boat JULIUS CÆSAR crossed the Adriatic in a stormy night, to hasten over his forces from ITALY. See his conference with CÆSAR, (LUCANI Pharf. lib. v. 527.) where CÆSAR, seeing his security amid the tumults of war, exclaims—

O vitæ tuta facultas  
Pauperis, angustique lares ! O munera nondum  
Intellecta Deûm ! &c.



XVII.

“ First, holy BERNARD, stripp’d him for the race,  
Warm for the goal, despising dull delays :  
O blest contagion ! O celestial prize !  
EGIDIUS soon, and blest SYLVESTER join,  
Fir’d by the beauties of the Nymph divine,  
And rivals in the course that gains the Skies.

XVIII.

“ Thus march’d the Chief before his fainted Band,  
With his celestial Comfort hand in hand ;  
Proud of the rigid cord, and sacred cowl,  
Nought of his lowly origin asham’d,  
From PETER’s chair the holy Hermit claim’d  
His charter’d right, with dignity of soul.

XIX.

“ So num’rous soon became the humble Train  
Of him, whose praise a less than heav’nly strain  
Should ne’er attempt, the papal Chief bestow’d  
On him, who all his will to God resign’d,  
A second honour to the former join’d,  
The ghostly unction of the Sons of God.

XX.

“ Impell’d by holy thirst to seal his Faith,  
In foreign realms by voluntary death,

St. 17. l. 1. 4. BERNARD, EGIDIUS, and SYLVESTER, three of  
the first followers of St. FRANCIS.

He and his followers, at the SOLDAN's chair,  
All unappall'd, the Gospel trumpet blew ;  
But Heav'n deny'd him yet the Paynim crew,  
A tribe ungrateful to his pious care.

XXI.

" Thence to his native Strand he came once more,  
There 'twixt VALDARNO's vale and TYBER's shore,  
His last reward, his blest Redeemer gave  
That glorious stamp, which long his limbs confest  
He wore, till late the Pilgrim funk to rest,  
And to the realms of glory past the grave.

XXII.

" His poverty to his observant Train  
He last bequeath'd ; then to the heav'nly Train  
His Spirit soaring, left his humble dust ;  
No other obsequies the Hermit chose,  
No decorations of his final close,  
No haughty monument, nor breathing bust.

XXIII.

" Such was that Pilot once, who well could guide  
The GALILEAN barque thro' Ocean wide,

*St. xx. l. 3. He and his followers —*] St. FRANCIS took a journey to EGYPT, to propagate the Gospel there, about the time of the unfortunate expedition of JOHN DE BRIENNE, king of JERUSALEM, 1216. The king of EGYPT, rather of the MAMELUCS, was MELADINE, who, according to contemporary authors, was not disinclined to Christianity.—See FULLER's Holy War, b. iii. c. 27.—See also Flor. Hist.

Thro' storms and threat'ning rocks, and swallowing  
 He that by his example learns to fail, [sands :  
 Will reach the haven with propitious gale,  
 Where lasting treasures heap the blisful Strand.

XXIV.

" But now, since his terrestrial toils are done,  
 His flocks to unaccustom'd forage run,  
 And thro' forbidden fields at random rove ;  
 And still, the farther from their home they stray,  
 Still less returns the Shepherd will repay  
 For all his early care and vested love.

XXV.

" Some still are found who dread the devious path,  
 And near their Shepherd keep with constant faith ;  
 But few are those, and held in high disdain  
 By the apostate crew.—But mortal, hear ;  
 If aught proclaim'd in this superior Sphere  
 Has weight, to warm to love the godless Train.

XXVI.

" If you my words with due attention weigh'd,  
 shew'd the parent stem, the noxious shade,  
 Which those vile Scions with degen'rate boughs  
 Have spread around ; nor need I more explain  
 My meaning, when I tax'd th' apostate Train,  
 Instructed well, but faithless to their vows."

END OF THE ELEVENTH CANTO.

1

## CANTO THE TWELFTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

The Spirit of St. BUONAVENTURA relates the Life, and pronounces the Panegyric, of St. DOMINIC; and mentions some other Spirits to be found in the Region of the Sun.

---

SOON as his awful charge th' illumin'd Soul  
 Had ceas'd, the mighty Orb began to roll,  
     And scarce the long defiling Band had trac'd  
 My lofty stand, when many a living Star  
 Round the horizon light'ning from afar,  
     With ample round th' internal Orb embrac'd.

### II.

With measur'd step, and correspondent strain,  
 The march and music of the midmost Train  
     They match'd harmonious, as they mov'd along;  
 Their hymns surpass'd our low discordant lay  
 Far as the Summer Sun's meridian ray  
     The darkeft Orb around his station hung.

III.

As Ev'ning IRIS prints her bended bow  
 With fainter semblance on the fable brow  
 Of some dark cloud, with magic pencil drawn,  
 Arch beyond arch ; or as the Voice returns,  
 When her disastrous passion ECHO mourns,  
 Till spent, like vapours at the rising dawn.

IV.

The wond'ring World from that celestial Sign  
 Collects the promise of the Voice divine,  
 That Earth no more shall sink in deluge drown'd ;  
 Thus these concentral Orbs of endless joy  
 Ran as a double garland round the Sky,  
 And like besieging armies clos'd us round.

V.

In jocund measure, long with festive lays  
 They mov'd, they caroll'd, mingling blaze with blaze,  
 Pursuing or oppos'd ; the sacred sound  
 Now faintly warbling in the distant Skies ;  
 Now loud and lofty seem'd the Song to rise,  
 Roll'd to the centre from the utmost bound.

VI.

As the consenting eyes at once are clos'd,  
 A sudden silence and a pause compos'd  
 The sacred movement, and the double chime ;  
 When a soft accent from th' abyss of light  
 Was heard, and thither turn'd my eager sight,  
 When thus the Saint began his strain sublime :

VII.

“ The glories of Seraphic love, which shed  
Such dazzling charms on mine elected head,  
Impels me to exalt the holy Name  
Of him, whose client sung in lofty lays  
A panegyric to my Founder's praise ;  
Their equal conflict merits equal fame.

VIII.

“ The banded Soldiers of the Cross, who cost  
Their Lord so dear, for such a num'rous host,  
To purchase temper'd mail to meet the foe,  
When their first armour fail'd, had now begun,  
Tho' his red ensign glitter'd in the Sun,  
To fill their files with dastard step and flow.

IX.

“ When their great Gen'ral, whose Imperial sway  
Their cohorts governs, o'er the lax array  
Cast his experienc'd eye, where heav'nly Grace  
(Grace undeserv'd, unearn'd) was seen to shine,  
Two Delegates he call'd, with words divine,  
And deeds, their emulative zeal to raise.

X.

“ In these delightful Climes where Zephyrs rise,  
And in their flight perfume the vernal Skies,

*St. vii. l. 3. — the holy Name of him,]* The Spirit of BUONAVENTURA is here introduced as relating the praises of St. DOMINIC, the patron of St. THOMAS AQUINAS, as the latter had celebrated St. FRANCIS, his patron.

Before in TUSCANY's gay bounds they fled  
The blooms of Spring, far eastward of the Strand  
Where PHOEBUS sinks to light another land,  
The second Sage the beam of Heav'n survey'd.

XI.

“ Where CALAROGA boasts her Master's shield  
Borne by CASTILIA's Monarch in the field,  
This Hero of the Faith, a dreadly foe  
To all its Foes, in happy time was born ;  
The dawn of Virtue, like th' increasing morn,  
Seem'd in his cheek and youthful eye to glow.

XII.

“ Ordain'd a Prophet ere his destin'd birth,  
When the due time had solemniz'd on earth  
The holy rite, that to his heav'nly Spouse  
Bound him with links of love, the fainted Dame  
That held the Infant, saw his dawning fame,  
And all the glory of his future vows.

XIII.

“ A Name, according to the will of Heav'n,  
That stamp'd his rising character was giv'n,

*St. xi. l. 1. —*CALAROGA,] A town in OLD CASTILE, where DOMINIC was born, the founder of the Inquisition ; the dreadful tyranny of which had already appeared against the Albigeois, nor, I suppose, was the Poet free from its terrors. He, however, might have avoided the praises of DOMINIC, had his character appeared to him in the same light that it does to us.



To him the VINEYARD'S LORD his task assign'd,  
That mark'd him chosen for his Sov'reign's aid ;  
His first command the ready Slave obey'd,  
Still harmonizing with th' eternal Mind.

XIV.

" Oft was he found, when all was lock'd in sleep,  
At Night's deep noon in meditation deep,  
As pond'ring the great task that lay before  
His eyes, and claim'd his hands while yet a boy ;  
O, Father ! fill'd with more than mortal joy !  
O, happy Mother ! who this Infant bore !

XV.

" Not led to study by the love of gold,  
Like THADDEO's mercenary train of old,  
Or those that Ostia breeds, he lent his hours  
To Contemplation, from the World immur'd,  
By the pure Manna of the Word allur'd,  
In search of Truth to ply his mental pow'rs.

XVI.

" Soon was he call'd the sacred mound to raise  
Round that great VINEYARD, which so soon decays,  
When impious hands the sacred plant profane ;  
His influence o'er Saint PETER's Chair was seen,  
A refuge to the just, when time has been,  
Tho' now dishonour'd by a sordid reign.

XVII.

Not little to bestow, but much to hold,  
Not to dispose for self the vacant fold,

The hallow'd portion of the Poor to spend  
Was not his aim, but 'gainst the dang'rous tide  
Of rising crimes the barque of Faith to guide,  
And for the hallow'd plant of Truth contend.

XVIII.

“ For these celestial laws the Hero fought,  
Of old by Patriarchs and Apostles taught,  
Arm'd with the formidable pow'r to foil  
• Beginning Herefy ; where'er it spread,  
He swept it down like a full torrent, fed  
By moony floods, and purg'd the tainted foil.

XIX.

“ And as the Flood with more resistless sway  
All opposition whelms, and sweeps away,  
So Herefy's obstruction felt his wrath  
Where'er it rais'd its head : his calmer wave  
Then soon began with silver stream to lave  
The spacious seed-ground of the public Faith.

XX.

“ When arm'd Religion on her rushing Car  
Came like a fiery Amazon to war,  
Such were the wheels that bore his moving throne ;  
Nor with less formidable tempest came  
The second axis with its orbs of flame,  
So late by sage AQUINA's plaudits known.

*St. xx. l. 3. — the wheels that bore his moving throne,]* St.  
FRANCIS and DOMINIC are described as the two axes of the Cha-  
riot of RELIGION.

XXI.

“ But now its mad’ning wheels have learn’d to stray  
 Spontaneous from the heav’n-appointed way,  
 While some pursue, and some disdainful turn  
 From the false Guide ; but Harvest is at hand,  
 The tares expect the heav’n-commission’d Band,  
 Forbid the gran’ry, and condemn’d to burn.

XXII.

“ Whoe’er will search our FOUNDER’s sacred fold,  
 Some virtuous brethren there may still behold,  
 Our regulations still remain the same ;  
 Not so COSAL and ACQUASPARTA’s train,  
 One held the brethren with too lax a rein,  
 And tyranny disgrac’d the other’s Name.

XXIII.

“ BAGNAREA’s monast’ry I rul’d of old,  
 Never by sublunary views controll’d,  
 But in my sacred task consum’d my days ;  
 Sage AUSTIN, with his holy Comrade here,  
 Who first with FRANCIS chose the lot severe,  
 Cast their eclipse, and mix their mutual rays.

*St. xxii. l. 4. — COSAL and ACQUASPARTA, ] Two Monasteries of DOMINICANS ; one famed for the laxity of its discipline, and the other noted for unnecessary rigour. The authenticity of the Characters in general given by the Poet, may be presumed from the Records of these Monasteries, cited by LUCA VALDINGO, edit. Angelucci, tom. iii. p. 188.*

*St. xxiii. l. 1. BAGNAREA, ] A Monastery in ORVIETO, where BUONAVENTURA was Abbot.*

XXIV.

“ Illustrious HUGO follows close behind,  
And sage CEMESTER, with th’ IBERIAN join’d,  
Far-fam’d below, and cloth’d with light above ;  
Because from ZENO’s magazine he drew,  
These arms that foil th’ misbelieving Crew ;  
And NATHAN dreadful to licentious love.

XXV.

“ CHRYSOSTOM, ANSELM next, an holy Pair,  
Then he that the first Science made his care,

*St. xxiii. l. 4. Sage AUSTIN, with his holy Comrade—*] AUSTIN’s Comrade was Father ILLUMINATUS ; they were both some of the most early followers of St. FRANCIS. ILLUMINATUS also took a journey to EGYPT, to convert the MAMELUCS.

*St. xxiv. l. 1. Illustrious HUGO—*] HUGO DE SANTA VETTORE, a native of IPRES, and a famous Theologian of the Times.

*St. xxiv. l. 2. CEMESTER,*] Author of a Scholastic History.

*Ibid. — with th’ IBERIAN join’d,*] PETRUS HISPANUS, here called the IBERIAN ; he wrote twelve Books of Logic.

*St. xxiv. l. 6. NATHAN,*] NATHAN, the Prophet.

*St. xxv. l. 1. CHRYSOSTOM, ANSELM*] CHRYSOSTOM, the celebrated Archbishop of CONSTANTINOPLE.—ANSELM, Archbishop of Canterbury, who maintained a long and fierce dispute in favour of the POPE’s rights of investiture in ENGLAND, against HENRY I. ; he was a Prelate of considerable learning.

*St. xxv. l. 2. Then he that the first Science—*] DONATUS, who wrote on Grammar, here called the FIRST ART.

Appear with him that fill'd MOGUNTIA's see,  
Near the CALABRIAN, of prophetic fame,  
Like the bright Stars that shed an ev'ning flame,  
Hymning their God they come, an hallow'd three."

XXVI.

The holy rapture of the Sage divine  
Mov'd me the praises of his Lord to join ;  
With praise the heav'nly concave seem'd to ring,  
Sent by th' assembled Choirs, whose gen'ral voice  
Sung PÆANS to the native of the Skies,  
In strains that only Angels knew to sing.

*St. xxv. l. 3. — him that fill'd MOGUNTIA's see,*] **RABANUS MAURUS**, whose authority is cited against the Defenders of Transubstantiation ; he was made Archbishop of MENTZ.

*St. xxv. l. 4. Near the CALABRIAN,*] **JOACHIM**, of CALABRIA, accounted a Prophet.

END OF THE TWELFTH CANTO.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

## CANTO THE THIRTEENTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

The Spirit of Saint THOMAS AQUINAS proceeds to solve the  
Doubts that arose in the Mind of the Poet.

---

YE that desire with Fancy's kindling flight  
To view our prospects in the Realms of Light,  
And keep the glorious Image still in view;  
Mount on the Muse's wing, while I display  
Scenes never yet describ'd in Poets' lay,  
And thro' th' etherial fields my flight pursue.

### II.

If those thrice five bright voyages of Heav'n,  
Whose fiery aspects gild the brow of Ev'n,  
And pierce with keener beams the robe of Night,  
Would mix their rays with that resplendent Car,  
That in the bosom of the Sky afar  
Whirl round the central Pole with ceaseless flight.

III.

If these twin Stars that round the axle glide,  
And seem the Chariot of the North to guide,  
    Would add their splendours to the radiant Line ;  
Then, at a signal giv'n, the ranks would part,  
And in a double file their glories dart  
    Aloft, like ARIADNE's gemmy Sign.

IV.

Then, if in countermarch the glorious maze  
Would flit along the Sky with thwarting rays,  
    Fancy a dusky semblance there would spy,  
How one Seraphic Line was seen to run,  
Cross'd by their brethren in the eye of Noon,  
    Glancing in turns before my central eye.

V.

Soon we perceiv'd the heav'nly dance exceed  
The utmost measure of created speed,  
    Far as the whirling Sphere, the languid Stream,  
Which round AREZZO's wall is seen to glide ;  
BACCHUS' nor PÆANS' praise their song supply'd,  
    But the pure Deity, exhaustless theme !

VI.

The song was finish'd soon, and clos'd the dance ;  
Then turning all on us the fervent glance  
    Of heav'nly love, like op'ning Summer's smile,  
As if our happiness their bliss increas'd,  
The sage Historian of the Saints address'd  
    My tingling ears again, in heav'nly style :



VII.

“ One golden crop has felt the winnowing van,  
 Another now is ready ; Son of Man,  
     Love will assist you to secure the grain,  
 And clear your view : you dream that HE, whose side  
 Gave a new being to his beauteous bride,  
     Excell'd in wisdom all his filial train.

VIII.

“ HE too, you think, who bought with streaming blood  
 The race of hapless Mortals lost to God,  
     Whose ransom far the weight of Sin out-weigh'd,  
 Took as a Man a more abundant draught,  
 Than ever yet sublunar being quaff'd,  
     Of that prime sapience which the world had made.

IX.

“ This bred your wonder at my speech before,  
 That he who erst JUDEA's sceptre bore,  
     The third, but here the fifth, celestial place,  
 In glory holds, in wisdom all excell'd,  
 Whoe'er on earth the light of Heav'n beheld,  
     By the full bounty of celestial grace.

X.

“ Observe my words ; belief will soon ensue,  
 As the round circle to the centre true ;

*St. vii. l. 1. One golden crop, &c. ]* The first doubt which AQUINAS had seen arising in the mind of the Poet, viz. how such pure institutions as he described Canto x. St. 20. could be so soon corrupted, having been already solved at large (Canto xi. and xii.) in the histories of ST. FRANCIS and ST. DOMINIC ; he proceeds to treat of the second, viz. In what sense the character of unequalled wisdom was ascribed to SOLOMON?

The various beings that exist below  
Are but reflexions from th' eternal thought  
Of our great Sire, by love celestial wrought,  
Embody'd love, to whom their birth they owe.

XI.

“ That EMANATION, which for ever streams,  
As from the Sun, its wide diverging beams,  
Yet still subsists, another and the same,  
With its primeval source, in nature one,  
Irradiates first from his eternal throne  
Those creatures which the primal order claim.

XII.

“ Then, downward, as the scale of being goes,  
Still less and less the heav'nly splendour glows,  
Till those terrestrial things that bloom and fade,  
In constant change, with faint and transient light,  
It calls to being from the womb of Night,  
As various as their cause by Nature made.

XIII.

“ The genuine stamp of each created kind,  
Returns the Image of th' Almighty Mind,  
Obscure, or vivid, to the curious eye ;  
This tree with nobler fruit its boughs adorns,  
And that beneath degen'rate clusters mourns,  
As the materials vary their supply.

*St. xi. l. 1. That EMANATION—*] See Note at the end of this Canto.

XIV.

“ Were matter always to perfection wrought,  
The sacred effluence of the Maker’s thought  
A bright resemblance over all would shed ;  
But *mediate* causes less and less display  
Their pow’r, like him whose pow’rs no more obey  
The sapient dictates of th’ experienc’d head.

XV.

“ If love eternal, with immediate hand,  
Upon the mass its genuine stamp expand,  
The Image of Perfection there is found ;  
Thus the primeval earth with vernal joy  
Return’d the smile of the benignant Sky,  
And heav’nly choirs the PREGNANT MAID renown’d.

XVI.

“ So far you judg’d aright, that mortal Man  
Ne’er match’d this Pair, since first the world began ;  
But then you ask, How then could ISRAEL’S SAGE  
Excel the Sons of every age and clime ?  
To end th’ enquiry, recollect the time  
When Heav’n vouchsaf’d to give the peerless pledge.

XVII.

“ He was a king, and as a king implor’d  
To hold th’ imperial balance and the sword,  
With wisdom such as regal cares requir’d ;  
No myst’ries of Heav’n he wish’d to know,  
Nor how contingency can from prescience flow,  
Nor e’er to motion’s origin aspir’d.

XVIII.

“ If, then, your Mind took in my full intent,  
 IMPERIAL Wisdom there was only meant,  
 When his I shew’d, so great beyond compare :  
 Above the few good kings that rul’d below,  
 I only meant his eminence to show,  
 ’Mongst earthly monarchs, an example rare.

XIX.

“ Tho’ with the second Adam, or the first,  
 He cannot vie, amid corruption nurs’d,  
 With this distinction he may claim full well  
 The character I gave : now learn, my Son,  
 With tardy foot to make your Judgment run,  
 And Fancy’s wild excursions to repel.

XX.

“ Unhappy they, who, by her lure betray’d,  
 And, like ’lorn travellers, by meteors led,  
 Their affirmation or denial give  
 Unweigh’d, for Fancy leans to Falsehood’s part,  
 And soon to Passion’s rule betrays the heart,  
 And her embruted Slaves in bondage live.

XXI.

“ ’Tis worse than folly far the Strand to leave,  
 And let the faithless flood our barque receive,  
 Plunging in search of Truth, without the skill,  
 Or Heav’n’s inspiring light, the gem to find.  
 Such are the sport of every wave and wind,  
 And leave the task for others to fulfil.

XXII.

“ PARMENIDES and proud MELISSUS try'd  
To fail that sea, and perish'd in the tide,  
Or o'er the wat'ry world, without a Star,  
Wander'd unknowing where ; SABELLIUS too,  
And ARIUS, who the Demon's falchion drew,  
Against a Christian code denouncing war.

XXIII.

“ Let none presume to fix *his* final state,  
Or on such awful question hold debate ;  
Oft have I seen the vernal stem beguile  
The reaper's hand : and oft the rigid thorn,  
That to the blast of winter waves forlorn,  
In June with rosy wreath is seen to smile.

XXIV.

“ Oft-times the bark that scuds with prosp'rous gale  
Thro' the dividing waves with flowing fail,  
Yet sinks in view of port, the pious man  
May fail ; the Penitent, altho' by spoil  
He liv'd, may purchase Heav'n by arduous toil  
Ere death : it is not our's their fate to scan.

St. xxii. l. 1. PARMENIDES and proud MELISSUS — ] PARMENIDES, a Philosopher, who held that the Sun was compounded of heat and cold.—MELISSUS denied motion.

St. xxii. l. 4, 5. SABELLIUS — ARIUS, ] SABELLIUS held that the distinctions in the Trinity were merely nominal.—ARIUS denied the Divinity of the SECOND PERSON.

✠ Some Extracts from the PHILOSOPHICAL Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion, by the Chevalier RAMSAY, will tend to illustrate the Speech of AQUINAS, Stanza XI. and several other Passages in the PARADISO.

His principles are laid down in a series of propositions, with their requisite corollaries and scholia, a few of which, that can be connected together without the intermediate deductions, will serve to give a general idea of his subject, as far as it relates to the opinions of DANTE, which, we observed before, were strongly tinged with Platonism.

I.

In the 21st proposition he endeavours to prove, that " God can create nothing but what he loves. He can love nothing but what resembles him in some degree ; therefore the visible creation is a representation of God by external Beings : for, when we ascend to the First Cause, and consider his absolute Essence, we shall find that the only reason he had to *fall* out of himself was, to impart perfection and happiness, by representing himself in external Beings ; that is, in substances distinct from his own. He can love nothing, and so wills nothing, but what resembles him in some degree ; as nothing else can be perfect or happy. He, therefore, after his other EMANATIONS, which are treated of here at large, and are called CO-ETERNAL, was determined to produce an infinite number of living Images and lively Pictures, not by dividing his substance, but by creating real Beings distinct from himself, and representative of his all-beautiful Essence ; as first the free communicative goodness of God flowed from the *love* of his consubstantial Image (the Son), so all the creatures were in some degree representative of the Divine perfections ; otherwise God could not have loved them, nor consequently willed their existence. This appears plain, when we consider the nature of infinite power and infinite goodness ; they cannot act separately, nor independently of each other. God cannot produce, without loving the effects of his power ; though rationals may render this love ineffectual as to themselves, for he cannot love them  
unless

unless they resemble him: thence it follows, that in the original creation, all Beings, every thing that was created, were in some degree representative of the Divine perfections. The present state of the creation indeed, in *this* small portion of the universe that we inhabit, is quite different from the primitive state of things, when they came pure out of the hands of God.

“ Hence, in a state of pure and exalted Nature, God could manifest his Divine perfections to Intellectual Beings, in two manners; either by admitting them to the immediate vision of his absolute Essence, or by displaying to them his power, wisdom, and goodness, in his created representations. They may contemplate the Original, or the Picture; enter into commerce with the pure Divinity, or into mutual Society with each other.

“ Hence, to know the intimate essences of things, we must know that precise degree of perfection God intended to represent by them: therefore we *now* cannot know these intimate essences.

“ God never acts in creation from necessity; it is equally a matter of free choice in him to think of finite ideas, or to create finite substances, but the latter we might expect from his goodness.

“ He can represent himself externally either by living Images, or by simple Pictures. Creation is a representation of God by things external; an Original can be represented both by living Images and simple Pictures; therefore God may thus represent himself both by living Images and simple Pictures. He may either be represented in a direct manner, by the attributes of Beings capable of Thought, Reason, and Love; or in a remote and less perfect manner, by the accessory forms communicated to Beings that are absolutely incapable of thinking, reasoning, and willing. For this reason the Scriptures represent Spirits as the living Image of the Most High, and the Material Universe as his Shadow or Picture. Thus Moses says, that God created Man in his own Image and Likeness: the Heavens shew forth the glory of God; the eternal Power and Godhead were understood by the things that are made. Spirits are living Images and Actors upon this great Theatre, that are capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying the original. By the simple Pictures, we mean the World; and by living Images, the intellectual Universe of Spirits.

“ These living Images are essentially active, or capable of action ; as creation is a representation of God, who is infinitely active, so must the living Images of the Deity be. They must also be intelligent and reasonable ; for what is essentially intelligent cannot be represented in a lively manner by what is unintelligent and insensible. God knows himself and his works ; therefore Spiritual Beings must be capable, in some measure, of knowing him and his perfections. This is conception, or reason ; and conception precedes or implies comparing and judgment, which is action in the highest degree : it is an innate activity, consubstantial with the Mind.

“ The living Images of the Deity must be capable of love ; for God loves himself necessarily, and all that he has made. His essence is love ; the living lively Images of a Being that is essential love cannot be absolutely incapable of love ; therefore the living Image of the Deity must be capable of love.

“ I do not say, that finite Beings love necessarily as God loves, who loves himself necessarily, because he is good ; but they must love something necessarily, either God, the creatures, or themselves. They may forget God, by falling into a degenerate state, and then, as a punishment, they may lose all gratifying sensations of, and communications with, the creatures ; but as they cannot be separated from themselves, they must love themselves necessarily if they be truly self-conscious. This consubstantial love of Self is inseparable from their nature ; they may lose all other loves, but they cannot lose this ; and as they love necessarily their Being, they must love their *well* Being. There is no state of perfection or imperfection, of elevation or degradation, of purity or corruption, in which, or by which, finite intelligences can extinguish this natural and necessary co-essential love of felicity ; unless we suppose them reduced to a natural state of insensibility, both of their own existence, and that of all other Beings.

“ Love, or rather the capacity of loving, is a necessary property of their natures ; it flows from their essence and definition, as living Images, and Imitations of HIM who is all love.

“ Some schoolmen say, that the Soul is *passive*, unless moved by God ; but in those lively Images, even love must be preceded by conception or intelligence ; now, as we said before, conception is reason,  
and



and reason is comparing, and comparing is action, and may be the effects of our own activity, (as living Images of the Deity,) and independent of all supernatural light. All Beings capable of knowing, comparing, and judging, are capable of willing, desiring, and tending to what appears to them good or beatifying. The Soul by its essential activity tends to this, or to its *appearance*. This suffices to make it exert its natural self-moving activity. As God, by his creating matter, made it necessarily and essentially moveable by the same act; so, by creating Spirit, he rendered it by the same act necessarily and essentially active, or capable of volition. The idea of mobility is necessarily included in that of the material Picture, and the idea of volition in that of the intelligent Image." "Reason is action, and love is action; therefore the lively, loving, intelligent Images of the Deity must be essentially active. The Soul made for him who is infinite, has an unbounded capacity for knowledge, and an insatiable thirst of felicity. The more it knows, the more it desires to know. Its capacity dilates proportionably as it receives. Made for the contemplation and love of the absolute Infinite, it can never find repose till it returns to him, *and loses itself in Him* \*. It may mistake its object and attach itself to finites, but it will exhaust all their perfection, grow weary, and disgusted; and yet, from long contracted habit, not be able to turn its attention to more noble objects, and thence its intelligence and love must in that case be the cause of its misery.— This restless activity is the source of all its pains and pleasures, of all its misery and happiness, of all its passions and natural virtues. This immense capacity of knowledge and love, is also that inward and intimate fund, centre, and sanctuary of the Soul, which none but God can fill. If there were no other finite Spirits, this desire of knowledge would be an eternal spring and fountain of activity in the Soul. An infinite object cannot be found in itself, or the creatures; therefore it must go out of itself, rise above itself, and *lose itself* in the immense of Good, to be satisfied.

" But the simple Pictures of the Deity consist not of one single individual indivisible substance, but a compound of innumerable dis-

\* This is the Platonic idea of the Soul's absorption in the *Tô 'En*.

tinct and divisible substances. Matter exists by extension or diffusion of parts, and is therefore from diffusion divisible, not only ideally, but in reality. Whatsoever is divisible is compounded of innumerable distinct and divisible substances ; therefore simple Pictures of the Deity are not one single individual substance, but a compound of innumerable distinct and divisible substances. Matter is capable of infinite forms, divisions, and motions, no one of which taken separately, (as the points and lines of a Picture represent the original,) but the *totality* taken together, is the representative ; so each individual species of the material Picture does not represent the great Archetype, but the totality together may represent his infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, by their impressed forces, artful compositions, and beautiful forms : this then is one of the most essential differences between the living Images and the simple Pictures. Every Individual of the former is one uncompounded monade, or substance, representative of the Divine perfections, by an essential activity, intelligence, or love : whereas every atom of the simple Picture is not so ; only the totality, symmetry, and composition of the whole, that adumbrate the Divine wisdom and goodness.

“ The Ideas, Sensations, and Perceptions which we have of corporeal and sensible objects, very often turn us away from the contemplation of the Divine perfections.

“ The desire to shun sensible Pain, and to enjoy sensible Pleasure, is the source of all the crimes and errors of the World: none can doubt this, but such as deny there is any such thing as Truth or Virtue.

“ God may communicate to his living Images the power of mutually acting on each other by a real activity ; for God is active, and cannot be represented by things external, but by giving them activity ; therefore he can communicate to his living Images a real activity, by which they can mutually operate on each other.

“ Sensation and Reflection are the only two sources of our Ideas, simple or compound.

“ Nature exalted, is Nature as it came out of the hand of God, Eternal ORDER is the conformity of the Images or Pictures to their uncreated Original. Beings that resemble one common THIRD,  
must

must resemble each other. In a state of pure and exalted Nature, the eternal, universal, and immutable law of all finite intelligences was that of the infinite intelligence. In a state of pure and exalted Nature, all finite intelligences enjoyed a double happiness; one in the immediate contemplation of the Divine essence, another in the knowledge of his representatives. God can manifest himself two ways to finite intelligences; either by the immediate vision of himself, or by displaying his power, wisdom, and goodness, in his created representatives: therefore, in a state of pure and exalted Nature, all finite intelligences enjoyed a double happiness, one in the immediate contemplation of the Divine essence, another in the knowledge of his created representatives. This may be called the *essential* and *accessory* happiness of created intelligences, in which, probably, infinite numbers may have been from eternity employed; sometimes losing themselves in the central Abyss of the Divinity, sometimes entering into Society with each other, and adoring God in his works \*. That this intermixture is necessary, appears from this consideration, that if finite Spirits could contemplate the Divine essence without interruption, *the creation of the material World would have been useless*, because they *would have had no time* to enjoy this accidental accessory happiness; they would never have turned from the *Original* to the *Picture*, nor preferred an *Inferior* to a *Superior* bliss. But finite Minds, how exalted soever, would, it seems, be overpowered by the constant irradiations of the absolute Infinite, and probably overwhelmed with joys and raptures so strong and vehement, that they could not support the immense weight of Glory. All finite intelligences, therefore, are obliged to have recourse to the alternate returns of *essential* and *accessory* happiness. Immersed in the immense Ocean of Light, admitted to the Beatific Vision, there they remain till they are no longer able to sustain its radiant splendours; then they veil their eyes, fall out (so to speak) from the centre, retire to the circumference, and there contemplate the *Original* in the *Pictures*, and enter into Society with each other. And it is in those moments that they may become peccable. Could finite intelligences have for ever remained in the Divine presence, they would have been

\* See the PARADISO, *passim*.

for ever impeccable ; they would have had no reason for knowing, chusing, or loving inferior good ; God would have been their only object : but in those intervals, wherein they are obliged, by the finitude of their nature, to fall forth from the Divine presence, and to adore their infinite Creator in the creatures, they enter into commerce with finite things, and exert their natural powers and activities ; they may judge, reason, and compare, and therefore may err in their judgment, make a false choice, and so depart *inseparably* from eternal order, and that by a long continued series of imperceptible gradations, to be explained hereafter \*. The World or Universe was therefore, probably, first made for the accessory happiness of created Spirits of the most exalted kind : and from the necessity of having recourse to material Pictures, probably arose the notion that all finite Spirits are in some manner united to material, ethereal, or celestial vehicles, by which they are in commerce with the glorious corporeal World in the celestial, and were some of them supposed to be the Intelligences of Stars."

## II.

" In a state of pure and exalted Nature, all finite intelligences, or the living Images, followed the eternal and immutable law of Order ; which is to love God for himself, and all other Beings proportionably as they resemble Him.

" In the original integrity in which all were created, the eternal law of all finite intelligences is, and ought to be, that of the infinite Intelligence. God loves himself because he is perfect, and all Beings as they resemble Him. This law of Order, all Beings in an exalted state must have followed.

" There is a moral sense, by which we discover and approve virtuous actions and agents, independent of all selfish views. This has been demonstrated by experience †. The sensible pleasure, or the hope of reward, is not always the motive of our esteem. The love of God for himself, and of all other Beings as they resemble Him, is the law of eternal Order. Order is the conformity of the created Images to the design of the Creator. That the law of Order is a superior motive to mere pleasure appears from this, that Virtue is often loved con-

\* See B. v.

† HUTCHINSON'S Inquiry into Moral Good and Evil.

trary to the strong solicitations of terrestrial objects; which never would be the case if mere pleasure were the supreme motive. If that were the case, the vicious would be excusable, as they find no pleasure in Virtue. If pure reasonable pleasure acts upon us more strongly than impure unreasonable pleasure, it is not because it is more *agreeable*, but because it is more reasonable, and of superior dignity; consequently the view of Truth or Virtue may act as forcibly on the Will as the sensation of pleasure. God loves himself, not because he is selfish, but because he is perfect. Were there any other good different from him, he would go out of himself (so to speak) to contemplate it. It is the immutable relations of things, that determines our judgment and choice, and not the mere agreeable impressions they make on us. This produces a conformity to the object of our love, a constant observance of his laws, an inviolable attachment to justice, and an imitation of all the Divine perfections. The act of love when sensible is the greatest pleasure, but the act is not the motive. This love of preference is often accompanied in us, as in our great Model, (our Saviour,) with inward aridities and outward desolation, spiritual agonies and internal martyrdoms; and yet the Mind adheres invincibly to the choice it has made, from the sole love of justice.

“Our Epicurean Sectaries have no idea of this. They want to go to Heaven on a bed of roses. All their devotion is a pious drunkenness, and a sensible delectation. So soon as they feel no inward joys in the paths of Virtue, they look upon this desertion, as they call it, as a mark of reprobation and want of Faith. They love and esteem nothing in Piety but the melting transports of a mechanical Devotion. Thus, pleasure, *mere* pleasure, is the only spring of their Will; and thus the devout Fatalists and rigid Predestinarians, from a latent self-love, fancy themselves the only elect.”

But to return—“In all superior regions of pure and exalted Nature, all finite intelligences follow this eternal immutable law, the love of Order, and conformity to the Divine Will. From the observance of it flows naturally and necessarily all their perfection and happiness. This is not an arbitrary law, but flowing from the nature of God and of them, according to the eternal Order of things. He  
cannot

cannot beatify them without it, and they cannot be happy but by it. Felicity is not an arbitrary recompence, but a necessary consequence of this pure love.

“ He made them to love him, when they put no stop to his Divine illapses. They necessarily flow into their Minds, and still afford new displays of omnipotence and goodness. When they can no longer support the direct view of the Divine splendour, they enter into society with each other, admire the wonders of Nature, and compare the beauties they see in the Picture with those they have seen in the Originals ; and in proportion as they see new perfections in the Divine archetype, they discover also in the Pictures new manifestations of Divine power, &c.

“ Hence, in all states of rational Agents, fallen or unfallen, all finite intelligences, in order to enjoy their supreme felicity, that is the supernatural knowledge and love of the Supreme Infinite, must expose their faculties to his supreme irradiation, by a free conversion of all their powers to the eternal Source of Light, Life, and Love. They have all but one essential primitive law, in order to be continued in, or restored to, their original happiness ; for if they have turned away from this Source of Life and Light, they must necessarily become dead, dark, and miserable ; if they be exiled from the Beatific Vision, it is only because they have deviated from the eternal love of Order.

“ To love general, more than particular good, is a necessary consequence of this natural law. Into this the laws of nations, the social duties, and all human virtues, resolve themselves ; viz. into the love of Order.

“ No finite intelligence can obey this eternal law of Order by its own inherent strength, without the assistance of Divine Grace. The natural Love of God, as beatifying to us, is not loving him for himself. To lose ourselves in him, by a total preterition of self, to rise above ourselves, we must be enlightened, inspired, and animated, by a continual force descending upon us, and investing us. As no one can love the Father, but through the Son ; so no one can love the Father, but by the Holy Ghost, and a participation of that love by which he loves himself.

“ By

“ By this great principle we came to know the true difference betwixt Nature and Grace : the first was established by God’s all-powerful *simple* act, whose energy continues without interruption, and without repetition ; the other requires a constant, immediate repetition of the Divine acts, which are often interrupted and renewed by the alternate co-operation and resistance of the free Will. To compare, reason, know their being and will, their well-being, are essential properties of all finite intelligences, which they cannot entirely lose while they have their being ; but supernatural Light and Love, their seeing God as he is, and loving him as he deserves, are impressions that come from the immediate operation of the eternal Word, and of the Holy Ghost. Thus they who make all the natural powers and activities of the creature *immediate* effects of the Divine operation, confound Nature and Grace, and the action of God with the action of the Creature.

“ A natural knowledge and love of God may be acquired, but not that supernatural knowledge and love we are here speaking of. If this were otherwise, the Soul might be its own perfection, and its own happiness.

“ Hence the Will may have two motives of action ; natural self-love, and a supernatural love of God ; the desire of happiness, or the perception of truth ; perfection known, or pleasure felt. The Soul may always turn away its intellectual eye from the view of Truth, solicited by strong sensation of pleasure ; or may remain firm and unmoved in the love of truth, from a sentiment of justice : a tendency to universal good, or to private interest, is the very essence of the Will.

“ All finite intelligences may separate the love of Order from the love of Pleasure, since the view of the *one*, or the sensation of the *other*, may equally act upon, and influence the Will. This separation is Sin, or moral evil.

“ There is an essential difference betwixt the natural tendency of the Will towards God, as beatifying, and the action which makes us love God for himself. The one is common to us with the Devils and damned, the other makes us resemble Angels and beatified Spirits. As we break the law of eternal Order, by loving God  
only

only for ourselves ; so also we break it, by loving the Creatures more than God.

“ False self-love is therefore the primitive source of moral evil ; a self-idolatry that erects the Creatures on the place of God, that usurps upon all his rights, renders itself the centre of the creation and the end of all its actions.”

### III.

The Author proceeds to represent, what he supposes was the appearance of the material Pictures in this primitive exalted state. He imagines it represented the Deity, by being an immense ocean of ætherial matter, distinguished into three conditions or principles analogous to the three Persons ; viz. “ a fiery active principle,” “ an ætherial luminous fluid,” and, “ an elastic aerial fluid.” “ Thus fire, light, and air, the component parts of the pure fluid that fills the great expanse, are types, emblems, or pictures of the Divine essence, and its three consubstantial personalities.”

He then returns to his subject, and shows “ that all finite intelligences are peccable,” as they may have two reasons of willing ; the perception of truth, and the sensation of pleasure. Whatever is free and finite must be fallible and peccable ; till by long continued, repeated acts, it be confirmed in the immutable habits of good. To prevent moral evil by an instantaneous infusion of overpowering Grace, is contrary to the nature of a free intelligence, which cannot be confirmed in immutable habits of good, but by long repeated acts, &c. ; for this reason, fallen Man must pass through a state of probation. Hence the origin of moral evil is, the separation of the love of Self from the love of Order. The long repeated free co-operation of the Creatures with the supernatural operation of God in them, can only effect this. Thus deification is not like creation, a simultaneous momentary act of Divine Power, but an effect of the Creature’s free co-operation with the Divine transforming action.

“ The Predestinarians favour the monstrous atheism of VANINI, when they say, that God’s graces are irresistible, and that he refuses these irresistible graces to the most of Men.”

He next shows, that the present state of Man is a state of degeneracy and corruption : “ The Soul, deprived of its true object, finds nothing within itself but a tumultuous ocean of incoherent



and restless passions, that destroy each other successively ; who can express the terrible effects of self-love which appear in the world, and the inordinate love of pleasure which flows from this irregular love of SELF ? They begot, at first, lust, intemperance, hatred, debaucheries, robberies, murders, poisons, perjury, treason, forgery, and all the monstrous spawn of the blackest crimes."

After shewing the marks of this degeneracy on camps, courts, and colleges, he goes on to descant upon physical evil ; a no less copious source of declamation. But he clearly proves, from the attributes of God, and the nature of Man, that no Creature can suffer, but who hath merited punishment.

" The defection of all lapsed intelligences was gradual. As finite Beings cannot become perfectly good but by a long continued series of repeated acts, so they cannot become perfectly criminal but by a successive gradation of irregular desires : they did not pass instantaneously from a state of innocence, in which they were created, into a state of depravation. The degrees by which they fell were various. The different shades of return and relapse were imperceptible, both on angelical Spirits and human Souls.

" In regard to the most exalted Spirits, in their first creation, we may suppose them obliged to rise above themselves continually, in their love of God and Order, on its own account. Their employment therefore is communicating his blessings to all inferior Beings \* ; that so the transmission of Light, Life, and Order, might meet no interruption through all the celestial regions. The least self-approbation, self-complacency, or self-attribution of God's graces and communications, is an usurpation of his rights, and an infringement of the law of Order. Preterition, or self-annihilation of the infinitely Little before the infinitely Great, is the great sacrifice that created Beings owe to the absolute Infinite. This sacrifice must always bound and restrain the self-love of such exalted Beings, till they be confirmed in the supernatural habits of Divine Love. Yet, before they arrive at this desirable state, it is not at all unlikely that the exercise of pure disinterested love, and self-oblivion, might have been painful to them, because of the natural love

\* See PARADISO, Canto xxx.

of self inseparable from our essence. By *Pain* I only mean that supernatural effort, combat, and contention, to rise above self, and correspond to that divine attraction that draws them out of Self to unite them to the Divine Essence, before the supernatural habit of Divine Love was formed. This cannot be understood by those who are immersed in matter, and strangers to all the purest intellectual functions of the Soul. This is the first source of peccability in all finite Spirits on their first creation. It arises not from any defect of God, or refusal of his graces, but from the natural and necessary finitude and weakness of the Creature, how great soever its natural capacity is, till by a free and long correspondence to God's supernatural action, it be truly transformed, divined, and confirmed in the habits of pure love.

“ It is not altogether inconceivable, how the most elevated and luminous order of Spirits, that approached nearest to the throne, and that were immediate channels of conveyance to all other intelligences, might be dazzled by the view of their own excellency. The greater, the sublimer, the more exalted their natures were, the more easy it is to conceive that they might be capable of self-attribution, self-appropriation, and self-complacency ; unless they constantly turned off their views from self, to refer all to their great Original. By the least infidelity the sacrifice of self-annihilation must have become more and more difficult, and self-attribution more easy. This might have been the second imperceptible source of their declension.

“ In these moments, when the angelical Spirits went out of the immediate presence of God, and entered into society with each other, they became susceptible of error ; and so, by degrees, might have flattered themselves, that God's infinite goodness and self-sufficiency would engage him to relax the purity of his eternal laws, and dispense them from the duty of self-denial. They might have begun then to love him only as beatifying, and to desire the Beatific Vision for no other purpose but to gratify their natural and insatiable thirst after happiness. This spiritual concupiscence, this disguised and refined self-love, by which they referred the Creator to the Creature, and the infinitely Great to the infinitely Little, might have been the third step of their apostacy,

“ They

“ They did not, however, yet consummate their crime ; their defection was gradual. God employed, no doubt, all the efforts of his power, without doing violence to their liberty. He opened (so to speak) all the treasures of his wisdom ; he displayed all the treasures of his goodness to hinder their infidelity ; but the more abundant his luminous communications were, the more they served to augment, in these seraphic Spirits, the high opinion they had of their own excellency, which is the most delicate and the most dangerous of all delusions. God pursued them from error to error, till, at last, there was no other remedy, no other way of curing their natural weakness, but by depriving them of the Beatific Vision for a time, without degrading them altogether ; and this might be the fourth step of their declension.

“ During this interval, it is probable, that the first and chief of the seraphic Spirits, irritated by the privation of their essential happiness, though not yet deprived of the accessory felicity, which they enjoyed in their celestial abodes, fell by degrees into open rebellion, and declared war against Heaven, which was the fifth and last step of their apostacy,” &c.

END OF THE THIRTEENTH CANTO.



## CANTO THE FOURTEENTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

The Poet, after having some Doubts resolved by BEATRICE, ascends to the Planet MARS, in which he finds the Spirits of real Heroes, Patriots, and Champions of the Faith.

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STRUCK from without, the wavy circles roll  
Back to the centre of the brimming bowl ;  
The undulations, from WITHIN repell'd,  
Beat on the verge ; the Tenant of the Sun,  
From the horizon of eternal Noon,  
Thus the solution of my doubts reveal'd.

### II.

But now within my Mind began to move  
Another doubt : the object of my love  
Perceiv'd the dawning thought, and swift as light  
Took up the topic where AQUINAS clos'd,  
And to the wing of that celestial Host  
Convey'd it, where he stood in robes of Light.

III.

“ Your aid the musings of this mortal need,  
Too modest for himself his wants to plead,  
Not ev’n in thought ; tho’ much he longs to know,  
If these long lucid vests that robe you round  
Fade, when you hear the trump of Judgment sound,  
Calling the trembling World to bliss or woe.

IV.

“ But, if they still reflect, with cloudless ray,  
The living glories of that lasting Day  
That sees no setting Sun ; can mortal eye  
Such emanations, uneclips’d, sustain  
From cloudless Light, and from th’ empyreal Train,  
For ever flashing round the ample Sky ?”

V.

As skilful Dancers leave the solemn round,  
And in a frolic measure beat the ground  
In quicker cadence, by the mirthful mood  
Of sprightly song inspir’d, along the Choir  
A gleam of sudden transport ran like fire,  
And dance and song with tenfold haste renew’d.

VI.

“ He, that his exit from the world deplores,  
And dreads the pass to these Elysian shores,  
To raptures without end, above control,  
Or dreads th’ oppression of eternal Light ;  
But little knows, what floods of fresh delight,  
With sweet refrigeration, charm the Soul !”

VII.

That TRINE ETERNAL ONE that ever reigns,  
And all, uncircumscrib'd himself, contains  
In triple melody from ev'ry Soul,  
In holy exultation, rung around  
Each Mind sublunar; for that hallow'd sound  
Would barter every joy beneath the Pole.

VIII.

Thus chiming loud, the moony Squadron bright  
Came bending round us in an Orb of Light,  
And soon a Voice in soft ELYSIAN tone  
Began, like that sweet AVE sung of old,  
When GABRIEL to the MAID his message told,  
Thus gently swelling round the radiant Zone:

IX.

" Long as th' eternal Jubilee extends  
That LOVE, which lights a Flame that never ends,  
For each pure Spirit weaves that dazzling vest :  
'Tis she, that from the bright empyreal ray  
Draws the long texture of eternal Day,  
The garb of Grace, the liv'ry of the Blest.

X.

" Those garments brighten in a gradual scale  
As the degrees of Charity prevail  
In ev'ry Soul ; and Love its vigour draws  
From contemplation of th' ETERNAL SOURCE  
Of Light and Joy, on which our mental Pow'rs  
And Sight are fix'd by Heav'n's eternal Laws.

XI.

“ Nearer we view the glories of his Face,  
As our dark faculties, by heav’nly Grace  
Sublim’d, in diff’rent attitudes ascend ;  
And, as his Grace descends like heav’nly dew,  
Our charms, still more improv’d, salute the view,  
And o’er our limbs the woven glories blend.

XII.

“ From Heav’n’s benignant Hand descends the boon,  
Free as these splendours of eternal Noon,  
And, as our Love aspires, our sharpen’d fight  
With more distinction spies the thing above,  
To Angel’s kin refin’d by fervent love,  
Till no created beam can blunt our sight.

XIII.

“ As kindled fuel glows with deeper hue,  
Like solid fire, conspicuous to the view,  
Thro’ the pale cincture of the folding flame ;  
So pale, so faint these splendours shall be found,  
When our new Bodies from the teeming ground,  
A Phalanx bright, their former Tenants claim.

XIV.

“ Nor shall those rays our visual organs tire,  
Nerv’d for the Vision of th’ empyreal Sire,  
When each corporeal Pow’r shall be refin’d,  
Amongst the Inmates of an higher Sphere,  
The deep extreme of heav’nly bliss to bear,  
All that the Sense enjoys, or charms the Mind.

*St. xi. l. 1. Nearer we view, &c.] See Note at the end of the  
13th Canto.*



XV.

" AMEN ! AMEN !" with such a fervent guff  
They cry'd, as show'd they lov'd in kindred dust  
Again to mount the Sky, a living cloud ;  
And not for selfish joy, but to behold  
Their Sires, their Sons, their Friends, belov'd of old,  
Long ere they walk'd the Sky in splendid shroud.

XVI.

As the horizon glows beneath the Dawn,  
Or when the dews of Eve refresh the lawn,  
When on the skirts of Heav'n the Stars appear,  
When Twilight throws around a dubious gleam,  
So a new Squadron from the World's extreme  
Came on, and clos'd upon the double Rear.

XVII.

Oh ! how mine eyes refus'd the prospect bright,  
How dark they grew beneath excess of light,  
That seal'd my sinking lids ! But soon the face  
Of my sweet Guide, with vivid smile serene,  
Supported me amid the glorious scene ;  
Yet must I leave untold her heav'nly Grace.

XVIII.

Like one emerging from a whelming flood  
I felt, as if new wak'd, my fight renew'd ;  
Thro' Æther wafted to an higher Star,  
With my illustrious Guide, my sudden change  
I knew, for all within my visual range  
I saw a crimson Light reflected far.

XIX.

Instant to Heav'n my heart's oblation flow'd,  
 For this new mark of Grace on me bestow'd,  
 And scarce had ceas'd, when in my heart I found  
 An instantaneous answer from on high ;  
 Such a deep rosy dawn, beneath the Sky [ground.  
 Spread o'er the plain, and flush'd the heav'nly

XX.

Full in the centre, two long trains of Light,  
 Crossing each other, met my dazzled sight :  
 " FATHER SUPREME," I cry'd, " what Sights are  
 here?"—  
 They, like two radiant Galaxies, embrac'd  
 The martial Star, that o'er the azure waste  
 Hung, threat'ning Discord from his crimson Sphere.

XXI.

But, nearer view'd, it shew'd the holy Sign,  
 Bless'd token to the World of Grace divine,  
 Over mid Heav'n its mighty Arms were spread ;  
 Compos'd of living Lights, I seem'd to move,  
 And still, where'er I turn'd, my Saviour's Love  
 For our lost Souls, in wondrous forms display'd.

XXII.

No image, seen beneath the Moon, can show  
 The deep impression of that heav'nly glow,  
 Which then I felt ; to that bless'd Man alone,  
 Who, like our SAVIOUR, to his Cross resign'd,  
 Follows his Lord, tho' Earth and Heav'n combin'd  
 Withstand his steps, the secret best is known.

XXIII.

Careering Sylphs along the Rainbows ran,  
Or shot from wing to wing, from rear to van,  
And, bright'ning as they pass'd, like meeting fires,  
Beam'd with eternal Love : the glancing ray  
Seem'd with a double light to fire the Day,  
At ev'ry movement of the heav'nly Choirs.

XXIV.

Thus Atoms frolic in the lucid beam,  
That paints the dusky void with golden stream,  
Thro' gorgeous casement, shed, or humble cot,  
Man's various lot below ! nor less my ear  
Imbib'd new rapture in that happy Sphere,  
As the full breeze came on, with music fraught.

XXV.

The song was mystic, but the lofty lay  
Rapt, with sweet violence, my sense away,  
Like the full chorded harp or timbrel's strain,  
When one, in Music's elements unskill'd,  
Hears it, he finds his heart with rapture thrill'd,  
Altho' its laws in darkness still remain.

XXVI.

Yet, by the loud triumphant note, I found  
The song was praise ; those words with dubious sound  
I heard alone, “ *Arise, and quell the Foe !* ”  
Those thrilling accents, thro' the charmed air,  
Were all I caught, altho' I walk'd with care  
Still list'ning to the song's ELYSIAN flow.

XXVII.

Yet, mystic as it was, the heav'nly sound  
 My spirits with a sacred rapture bound,  
 And deep amazement never felt before.  
 Perhaps extravagance my words may seem,  
 As I late us'd all happiness to deem  
 In her compriz'd, that won my heart of yore.

XXVIII.

But he, who recollects that joys increase,  
 From heav'nly stage to stage, in due degrees,  
 And that those eye-beams, whose celestial light  
 So long on me had smil'd, were turn'd away,  
 On these new Pageants of eternal Day,  
 Will find no cause my fickle Faith to flight.

XXIX.

No chord of bliss, that vibrates to the heart,  
 Tun'd for enjoyment by celestial art,  
 Relaxes here, but gains a livelier tone;  
 As higher still we climb the ample Sky,  
 Still more refin'd, as near the Source of Joy  
 It verges, trembling to th' eternal throne.

## CANTO THE FIFTEENTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

The Poet meets with CACCIAQUIDA his Ancestor, who enters into an Account of his Family, and concludes with an Invektive against the Manners of the FLORENTINES.

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LOVE woke the harmony, and Love allay'd  
That Pow'r by which th' angelic World is sway'd;  
As sinful Man, by Passion's stormy flaw;  
Mute was the Concert, mute the holy Psalm,  
Heav'n o'er the Anthem breath'd a sudden calm,  
Obedient to th' mighty MASTER's law.

### II.

To human pray'rs how heedful must they be,  
Who stopp'd the melody of Heav'n for me,  
To tend my questions and my doubts to clear!  
Well he deserves in endless grief to dwell,  
Who this celestial Instinct can repell,  
And fix his love on transient visions here.

*St. i. l. 2. That Pow'r—] viz. Love; as Man is sway'd by Passion.*

III.

As Fires they shew'd, that glanc'd across the Night,  
In an autumnal Eve, serenely bright,  
Seeming like Planets that desert their post,  
And o'er the Sky in conflagration sweep :  
But that the stellar Fires their station keep,  
As Heav'n first marshall'd their resplendent Host.

IV.

Soon from the right of that extended line  
Came glancing o'er the dusk a Form divine,  
Flash'd like an effluence from that beamy light ;  
Along the van of that harmonious Choir,  
Like a bright Warrior clad in arms of Fire,  
The Phantom ran, and gilt the gleam of Night.

V.

As in ELYSIAN bow'rs the sacred Shade  
With pious love his warlike Son survey'd,  
And gave a welcome to th' World below ;  
(If VIRGIL's deathless Muse be Heav'n inspir'd),  
The Saint in heav'nly panoply attir'd,  
Met my advance with kind paternal glow.

VI.

“ Descendant of my blood ! what boundless grace  
Wing'd your ascent to this distinguish'd place ;  
To whom did Heav'n her beamy valves display  
Twice but to thee ?” I turn'd my wilder'd look  
To him and to my Guide, with wonder struck,  
My Guide, who sweetly smil'd, like orient day,

VII.

A glance, that thro' my Nerves in rapture stole,  
And open'd all ELYSIUM in my Soul,  
She gave, which re-affur'd my anxious sprite ;  
Then with melodious voice and mien august,  
Of things he spoke, to minds inclos'd in dust  
Inscrutable, and wrapt in shades of Night.

VIII.

Necessity, not choice, inspir'd the Sage,  
Till taught the tide of eloquence to 'swage  
By the strong impulse which th' eternal flame  
Of love awoke within ; an humbler style,  
Of old familiar in my native soil,  
He chose, and thus display'd his ancient claim :

IX.

" For ever blessed be that TRINAL POW'R  
That such a boon, so rarely giv'n of yore,  
On one of my posterity bestow'd !"  
Thus, to the cope of Heav'n his ardent eyes  
Raising, he thank'd the Ruler of the Skies,  
Then thus to me his grateful accents flow'd.

X.

" Much have I long'd for this propitious Day  
Which oft th' eternal rolls in bright display

*St. viii. l. 1. Necessity, not choice, inspir'd the Sage,]* CACCIA-  
QUIDA, the ancestor of DANTE, is described as tempering his cele-  
stial eloquence, and lowering it to the understanding of his mortal  
Guest, by chusing the ancient TUSCAN style.

Disclos'd ; at last you bid my longing cease ;  
 Tho' in this splendid World arriving late,  
 Blest be that hand that bore thy welcome weight,  
 And wing'd thy voyage to the port of Peace !

XI.

“ In the clear mirror of th' eternal Mind,  
 You deem each dawning thought of yours divin'd  
 By me, from you to Heav'n, from Heav'n to me,  
 In momentary splendour from above,  
 Quick glancing from the feat of life and love,  
 Prime source of Wisdom's light in each degree,

XII.

“ You ask not who I am, nor why I seem  
 So joyful on this lucid World's extreme,  
 At our first meeting ; yet you guess'd aright :  
 Our rank and lustre here is soon disclos'd,  
 And in that heav'nly mirror still expos'd,  
 Where ev'n our thoughts are visible to fight,

XIII.

“ But that the sacred flame in which I burn,  
 (A love that longs to meet a due return),

*St. xi, xii, xiii. In the clear mirror, &c.] i. e. You think I see the thoughts in your Mind, and your curiosity to know who I am in the Beatific Vision, and that therefore you need not ask me any questions : you are right ; yet it is your duty to enquire and learn, for social communication is the bond of amity.*



May find the fuel which maintains it's fire,  
 Freely permit the mental Stream' to flow,  
 Truly reply to all I wish to know,  
 Freely from me my Name and state enquire."

XIV.

Again I turn'd me to my VIRGIN GUIDE ;  
 Her thought my secret meaning soon supply'd,  
 And quick as light, the sweet permissive sign  
 Gave pinions to my will, and thus I said :  
 " That uncreated beam, to you convey'd,  
 Irradiates all your bands with love Divine.

XV.

" That heat and light of intellectual love,  
 In kindred emanation from above,  
 Descending, each to each, commutual aid,  
 Above all calculation's reach, afford :  
 But Men (your mem'ry may confirm the word)  
 With flagging plume that heav'nly height invade.

XVI.

" This mental Mirror still to me denies  
 It's light, not yet an inmate of the Skies :

*St. xvi. l. 1. " This mental mirror— ] This may be illustrated by the extract from RAMSAY, (see Note at the end of Canto xiii.,) somewhat in this manner. As Men in this World can only contemplate the Deity in his material Pictures, defaced by the consequences of the Fall, or in his living Images under the same disadvantages, the affection must be languid, compared with the height to which they will arrive when inspired by the Beatific Vision.*

Hence, my affections flutter far behind  
 'Those Eagle soarings of celestial Love,  
 Caus'd by th' immortal Object seen above ;  
 Yet language fails to ease my swelling Mind.

XVII.

“ Tell thou, whose glory gilds that sacred sign  
 Of human joy and shame with Light Divine,  
 Thy fortunes and thy Name.” The Saint reply'd,  
 “ Distinguish'd blossom from my ancient stem  
 Deriv'd, with you a common blood I claim,  
 And far with longing eye your coming spy'd.”

XVIII.

Thus he continued : “ He, from whom you claim  
 Your second title, tho' an honour'd name,  
 On-Earth below, Lustration's pang deplores ;  
 He was my Son, and, in the third degree,  
 By female blood, is ancestor to thee ;  
 Your pray'rs may bring him from th' unhappy shores.

XIX.

“ Your City, then, no further spreads its bound  
 Than where the solemn bell, with iron sound,  
 Warns you of wasted hours. Her peaceful time  
 Calmly she spent ; she saw no gilded chain,  
 Her gemmy crown adorns her female train,  
 Her lofty sandals prop their march sublime.

*St. xviii. l. 4. He was my Son,—*] This was the ancestor from  
 whom DANTE acquired the surname of ALIGHIERI.

XX.

early cincture then the vest secur'd,  
 artful ornaments allur'd  
 Nature's genuine charms the roving eye;  
 daughter's dower no anxious sorrow bred,  
 for sumptuous portions then were shed,  
 wrinkles should prevent the nuptial tie:

XXI.

Uel Faction thinn'd our houses then,  
 ing Satyrs, in their dusky den,  
 force or fraud secur'd the trembling Prey:  
 with ROME our TUSCAN fabrics vy'd—  
 her ruin shall o'erwhelm their pride,  
 e'er from TYBER shook the OSTIAN Bay.

XXII.

BELLINCION BERTE wore a leathern vest,  
 arms of bone adorn'd his manly breast;  
 modest Matron from the Mirror came,  
 with the tints alone that Nature lent;  
 NERLI, with his Sylvan sport content,  
 'd with VECCHIO an untainted name.

*l. 6. Left wrinkles—] i. e. Left their Daughters should  
 ied. The contempt of marriage is a common effect of*

*l. 1. BELLINCION BERTE—] A noble FLORENTINE,  
 the celebrated QUALDRADA (see INFERNO, Canto xvi.  
 The literal translation is, he wore a leathern frock, with  
 none.*

*l. 5, 6. NERLI and VECCHIO,] The heads of two noble*

XXIII.

“ Those, in their stubborn coats, the **TUSCAN** soil  
 Subdu’d : their consorts, with assiduous toil,  
     The twirling spindle ply’d, and busy loom.  
 O happy times ! when all were fure to rest,  
 Where the green sod their Fathers ashes prest,  
     Whenever Time and Nature mark’d their doom.

XXIV.

“ None then, to distant **GAUL**-by lucre led,  
 His Confort left to fill a lonely bed ;  
     The Mother pleas’d the Child with many a strain,  
 (The genuine product of their native tongue,)  
 The distaff dancing to the simple song,  
     While ancient tales amus’d the rustic train :

XXV.

“ Proud **CIANGHELLA**, or vain **LAPÓ**, then,  
 Like prodigies among these ancient men,  
     Had drawn the gen’ral gaze where’er they past :  
 As **CINCINNATUS** and **CORNELIA**, seen  
 ’Mongst their degen’rate Sons with faintly mien,  
     At their abandon’d deeds would turn aghast.

XXVI.

“ Amid these tranquil scenes, in golden times  
 Unmark’d by vanity, unstain’d by crimes,  
     I saw the light ; and, in the sacred vase  
 Of pure lustration cleans’d, the stamp I bore  
 Of **CHRIST**’s Disciple on old **ARNO**’s shore,  
     Nam’d **CARCIAGUIDA** by the Son of Grace.

XXVII.

“ ELISEO with MORONTO shar'd my blood,  
My Confort came from PADUS' ancient flood !  
You drew your surname from her native plains :  
When CONRAD's hand the flag of war unfurl'd,  
His fates I follow'd to the eastern world,  
And fac'd the foe in SALIM's fair domains.

XXVIII.

“ His royal hand the Sword of Knighthood gave  
For many a valorous deed, by land and wave,  
Against the PAYNIMS, who usurp'd the shore  
Where yet your title undefac'd survives ;  
But, with ignoble hand, your Pastor gives  
The soil to MACON, steep'd in Christian gore.

XXIX.

“ There, by a Syrian shaft transfix'd, I fell,  
And bade the sublunary World farewell,  
Whose painted shadows 'lure the trembling Soul :  
Glad I resign'd my tenement of clay,  
And breath'd on JORDAN's banks my Soul away,  
By ANGELS wafted to th' empyreal Pole.”

*St. xxvii. l. 4. When CONRAD's band—*] The Crusade under the  
Emperor CONRAD, about the year 1143,

END OF THE FIFTEENTH CANTO.



CANTO THE SIXTEENTH.

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ARGUMENT.

The same Subject continued.

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“ O PRIDE of blood! you well your pow’r may  
Here, where affection’s energy is lost, [boast,  
If in the realms of unperverted Mind,  
With double gust your glory is enjoy’d,  
Where MARS with crimson glow the welkin dy’d,  
The warlike station to my Sires assign’d,

II.

“ The Sun and Wind impair the splendid hue  
Of thy bright robe, unless with caution due  
Thy Sons the bright paternal tints repair.”  
Now, with that awful title us’d of yore,  
(Tho’ now unknown,) on TIBER’s hallow’d shore,  
My Senior I address’d with rev’rent pray’r :

III.

BEATRICE stood apart, not distant far,  
And softly smiling, like the Morning Star,  
Gave the approving sign. I thus began :  
“ You are my Sire ; assur’d by you, I feel  
A new supply within of holy zeal,  
And tread the fields of Æther more than Man.

IV.

“ I recognize the tide of transport roll  
Thro’ all th’ internal avenues of Soul ;  
It seems within a sacred fount of joy  
Uncaus’d, which mortal mould could scarce sustain,  
Too potent far for human heart or brain,  
Unless I give abroad the rich supply !

V.

“ O you, from whom my ancestry I claim,  
Say, were your ancient Fathers known to Fame ?  
What year announc’d your birth on ARNO’s strand?  
Who rul’d, when first you saw the light below ?”—  
Like a reviving flame when Zephyrs blow,  
The bright’ning Spirit heard his Son’s demand.

VI.

Beams of meridian glory fill’d his eye,  
Which would have sunk me ; but his soft reply,

*St. iii. l. 4. You are my Sire—*] The plural *you* instead of the ancient *thou*, a form of speech first introduced by the ROMAN Emperors in common addresses.



In that majestic dialect of yore  
By your Forefathers us'd, reviv'd my heart,  
When he began his lineage to impart,  
And when his years began on ARNO's shore.

VII.

" From that blest'd moment, when the SERAPH's  
To JOSEPH's SPOUSE the hymeneal song, [tongue  
This world of Warriors, thro' the waste of Heav'n  
Sailing, two hundred times the bound had crost,  
Where the celestial LION keeps his post,  
Between the HEAV'NLY MAID and CANCER giv'n.

VIII.

" Full fifty journeys still remain'd to run,  
And thrice again he circled round the Sun,  
Ere I was born : by PETER's holy fane  
Thy Parents liv'd ; your annual Pageant sees  
Their Tribe, the fifth that fills the gay degrees  
As the proceffion sweeps the festive plain.

IX.

" Let this content you, of your Sires to know ;  
O'er all the rest let dark oblivion flow,  
There let your boast of Blood for ever lie ;  
Not those who fear'd the warrior God of old,  
Nor those who then had join'd EMMANUEL's Fold,  
Would scarce a fifth of FLORENCE now supply.

*St. viii. l. 6. As the proceffion—*] Some of these proceffions are described in Mr. ROSCOE's *Life of Lorenzo di Medici*, vol. i. p. 308.

*St. ix. l. 4. Nor those who fear'd, &c.] i. e.* Those who lived in the city of IDFULA, or FLORINA, in Pagan times, when they worshipped MARS ; and those who lived in CACCIAGUIDA's age would scarce make a fifth of the present number.

X.

“ The multitude, which now disgrace the name  
Of FLORENTINE, from fair CERTALDO came,  
From CAMPI’s Hills, and old FIGGHINE’s Mound;  
Mechanics vile, but factious, blind and bold :  
Would Heav’n, that now, as in the days of old,  
Deep TRESPIAN, with GALLUZZO, mark’d your  
bound.

XI.

“ Thus better were your lot, than to sustain  
The mad misrule of base AGUGLION’s train,  
And SIGNA’s wolfish band, that looks askance  
On Mammon’s fordid lure, and tracks for gold ;  
Trust, honour, duty, virtue, bought and fold,  
Whene’er the selfish friends their claims advance.

XII.

“ But, ah ! this holy privilege was lost !  
Because your hapless Tribes, in faction tost,  
Preferr’d rebellion to the lineal few  
Of just authority in CÆSAR’s Line ;  
For this, NEMESIS doom’d the Race malign  
On ARNO’s banks the endless feud to brew.

XIII.

“ Because degen’rate ROME her Infant cast  
Away, with Step-dame’s spite, and furious haste ;

*St. xiii. l. 1. Because degen’rate ROME, &c.] While the feuds between the Popes and the Emperors laid ITALY waste, many new families took refuge at FLORENCE ; who being noble themselves,*  
joined

Her royal Son from her inhuman arms  
Was rescu'd by the Gods, and woke the flaw  
That drove the Foes of liberty and law  
In your curs'd bounds to foster new alarms.

XIV.

“ From such materials rose the TUSCAN pride,  
Such muddy mixture swells the living tide  
That crowns your walls, and fills your public ways:  
The factious Merchant then, whose Sires of yore  
Near SIMIFONTI begg'd from door to door,  
In guiltless poverty had clos'd his days.

XV.

“ GUIDO in MONTIMURLO then had stay'd,  
Proud CERCHI had enjoy'd fair ACON's shade,  
And BUONDELMONTI spent, devoid of blame,  
His days by VALDIGREVE's copses green;  
Happy for him had FLORENCE ne'er been seen,  
Or fair DONATI woke the fatal flame.

---

joined the aristocratic faction, and fomented the disturbances of the Republic by various means, and under various pretences. The same was the effect, and from a similar cause, of the migration of numerous Plebeian families to that city.

*St. xv. l. 1. GUIDO in MONTIMURLO—*] This Baron not being able to defend his Castle against the PISTOIANs, sold it to the FLORENTINES, and came to reside in FLORENCE.—MONTIMURLO is not many leagues from FLORENCE.

*St. xv. l. 3. BUONDELMONTI—*] The Nobleman whose infidelity to his betrothed Spouse occasioned his death, and the tragical feuds which laid FLORENCE waste for so many years. See Hist. Flor. and INFERNO, Canto xxviii. Notes.

XVI.

“ Since rank and station in the world began,  
 Whene’er ambition lifts the lower Clan  
     To match their Lords, that State to ruin goes ;  
 As tainted viands hurt the vital tide,  
 That hapless Realm, by poison thus supply’d,  
     Falls a sure Victim to its deadly Foes.

XVII.

“ Nor think that strength increas’d, while factions  
 Can aught avail that rash misguided Train? [reign,  
     A furious Bull will into danger run,  
 Much sooner than a Lambkin ’reft of fight ;  
 And oft a practis’d arm decides the fight ;  
     When Cowards fly in crowds, the day is won.

XVIII.

“ LUNA with URBISAGLIA’s bounds survey ;  
 Their very ruins now have pass’d away :  
     The thin remains of SINIGAGLIA soon,  
 With CHIUSI, will be lost alike. Ah ! why  
 Should high-vy’d CITIES on their strength rely,  
     When nought is constant underneath the Moon ?

XIX.

“ All things, like us, on Dissolution’s wing  
 Must fleet away ; but soon the Seasons bring  
     The doom of mortal Man ; whilst Realms endure  
 Longer the shock of ages ere they die :  
 Their fate is thus conceal’d from human eye,  
     Seeming to cheated Fancy more secure.

XX.

“ As yonder **PLANET** with the Virgin brow,  
Old Ocean rolls in constant ebb and flow,  
Thus, to and fro, the **TUSCAN** fortunes fleet :  
Wonder not then, if noble stems are lost,  
Of old conspicuous, on that ill-starr’d coast,  
That led the War, or fill’d the Judge’s seat.

XXI.

High **CATILINE**, with **HUGO**’s race, I saw ;  
Those, who their Name from great **ORMANNO** draw :  
    **PHILIPPI**, **GRECO**, **ALBERIGO**’s line,  
And **SOLDANIER**, and **ARCA**’s noble stem ;  
**SANNELLA**, with **ARDINGHI**’s honour’d name,  
Great in their rise, and great in their decline.

XXII.

“ **RAVIGNA**’s noble family possess’d  
That feat, where now, in that felonious nest,  
    Those Traitors lurk, whose luckless guidance soon  
Will run the ill-starr’d Vessel of the State  
On Ruin’s Shoals ; yet o’er the **TUSCAN** freight  
Sage **PRESSA** rul’d for many a peaceful Moon.

XXIII.

High-blooded **GALIGAI** could then unfold  
His scutcheon’d poinard, with an hilt of gold ;

*St. xxii. l. 1. RAVIGNA’s noble family—*] Their House, through many revolutions, at last came into the possession of the **CERCHI**, the Heads of the Black Faction, and mortal enemies to **DANTE**. See Hist. Flor.

*St. xxiii. l. 1. High-blooded GALIGAI—*] From this family the famous Marchioness d’ **ANCRE** was descended ; who was put to death

EPILI's column then its station held ;  
 SACCHETTI, with SIFANTI, great in fame ;  
 GALLI, BARUCCO, with GIUOCHI's name ;  
 And he, whose guilt the Measure's fraud reveal'd.

XXIV.

“ DONATI's Stock was then of high renown,  
 And to the martial sword and peaceful gown,  
 ARRIGO's Sire and SIZIO's oft were call'd.  
 How lofty was their look, how proud their place,  
 Who now ABATI's ancient name debase,  
 And PALADOR in honours new install'd ?

XXV.

“ Their Fathers also then in fame were high,  
 Religious Friends ! tho' now the Junior fry  
 Batten at ease upon the Church's store,  
 Which their Forefathers gave ; for then unknown  
 Was ADOMAR, who frights with angry tone  
 The trembling Lamb, but shuns the Lion's roar.

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death in the reign of LOUIS XIII. When she was asked, “ By what charms she had acquired such an ascendancy over the Queen ?” Her answer was, “ By the natural superiority of strong Minds over weak ones.”

St. xxiii. l. 4. — *the Measure's fraud,*] The Family of CHIARAMONTI, whose ancestors were accused of falsifying a certain Measure, called a STAIO.

St. xxiv. l. 1. DONATI's Stock—] For the character of the Families of DONATI and ABATI, see Flor. Hist. ; and INFERNO, Canto xxx. and xxxii. Notes.

XXVI.

“ Alike by dastard dread and love of gold  
Subdu’d, their honour oft they bought and sold ;  
So stigmatiz’d, that proud DONATI scorn’d  
That the great Father of his noble Spouse  
Should bid his youngest Daughter plight her vows  
To his vile Son, altho’ by wealth adorn’d.

XXVII.

“ But CAPONSACCO then had left the height,  
And in the city claim’d patrician right,  
With GUIDO join’d, and INFANGATO grave ;  
Strange it may seem, but not less true than strange,  
Your native walls within their ancient range,  
To none but Patriots then a shelter gave.

XXVIII.

“ That Family which HUGO’s honours share,  
Whose bounty still the holy Tribes declare,  
Still on that day that bears their Patron’s name,  
(For on that day he fell,) were then renown’d ;  
But long since then have chang’d their former ground,  
And, with the rabble join’d, forgot their fame.

*St. xxviii. l. 1. That Family which HUGO’s honours share,* He means here, the Families of PULCE, GANGALANDI, NERLI, GIANDONATI, and DE BELLA ; who had been ennobled by the Imperial Baron HUGO, Vicar of the Empire to OTHO III., but had forsaken the aristocracy afterwards, and joined the GUELF, or democratical Party. These Families all wore the arms of HUGO quartered with their own ; and annually, on St. THOMAS’s day, (the anniversary of his death,) attended a solemn commemoration of him at the abbey of St. Settimo, where he had been interred.—LANDINO, VELLUTELLO, &c.

XXIX.

“ With GAALTEROTTI, IMPORTUNE then  
Was fam’d ; tho’ now, like Lions in their den,  
They stun old BERGO with their factious roar,  
And AMIDEI, from whose wrongs arose  
Discord and Death, and ARNO’s lasting woes,  
When FLORENCE yet laments in tears of gore.

XXX.

“ O BUONDELMONTO ! faithless to thy vows,  
How could’st thou thus forsake thy plighted Spouse,  
Led to the dagger by seductive charms !  
Joy now had hover’d o’er, with halcyon wings,  
Those plains where Fate her funeral descant sings,  
And EMA clasp’d thee in her liquid arms.

XXXI.

“ That mould’ring Arch was doom’d to see thy fall,  
Where FLORENCE yet deplores, in fun’ral pall,  
Thy death, that saw her peaceful Ev’ning close,  
Which never since has dawn’d ;—with such as these,  
On ARNO’s banks in honourable peace  
I liv’d, while FLORENCE yet was new to woes.

XXXII.

“ For justice fam’d, but terrible in war,  
Their military glory spread afar ;

St. xxix, xxx.] For the Story of AMIDEI, and the flight put  
on the Family by BUONDELMONTO, and its tragical consequences,  
see Hist. Flor. and Notes on INFERNO, Canto xxviii.



No Conqu'ror then their banner bore away  
 From the lost field; the hours had not arriv'd,  
 When, in their fury, all the Fiends contriv'd  
 To stain it's folds with blood in civil fray.

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✧ In this declamation of CACCIAQUIDA, there are many particulars that elucidate the early history of FLORENCE, and the admission of many new Families into the Republic, who exasperated its former dissensions, or created new ones. As many of these were GHIBELLINES, or Aristocrats of the Imperial Faction; and many, GUELFs, or Democrats, in the Papal interest; it is easy to conceive what would be the consequence of such infusions in a government, already, from its nature, sufficiently inclined to turbulence. As the Emperor encouraged the interest of the Nobles, the Popes favoured the Democrats, though contrary to the principles of their own domestic government. The disturbances which arose from the fermentation of these noxious ingredients, increased to such a degree, that it checked, in some measure, the national prosperity of FLORENCE. Even the share of affluence which it did acquire under that form of government, became pernicious to an extent that could not have ensued under a more regular Administration, where the public power is indivisible, and the executive and legislative properly distributed: this, when it is *known*, can be restrained; where it is divided (as was the case in FLORENCE) it becomes formidable from its uncertainty. On the other hand, the legislative power, which ought to be divided, that one part may be a check to the other, (as is the case with us,) was there united, and constantly obnoxious to the impulse of some factious demagogue, who, by means of that powerful engine, could, at any time, influence the counsels of the Republic, undermine the fabric of the State, and assume the character of its Tyrant. The many changes in the constitution of FLORENCE, when traced to their causes, give the fullest evidence that this assertion is well-founded. In such a situation of public affairs, prosperity itself must have had a baneful effect, as

the arrogance which accompanies wealth, when suddenly attained, must have constantly inspired a succession of theorists ready to foment seditious practices against such a government, to dictate new laws and specious innovations, and propose to mend the constitution, by a constant succession of fanciful and indigested improvements.—See MACCHIAVEL, Hist. Flor. VILLANI, *passim*.

END OF THE SIXTEENTH CANTO.

## CANTO THE SEVENTEENTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

CACCIAQUIDA foretells the Banishment of the Poet, and the Calamities he was doomed to suffer.—He directs him to leave a public Testimony against the Vices of the Age, in writing.

---

AS CLYMENS' Son, intent his Sire to know,  
 And the dark calumny to overthrow,  
 The fatal secret from his Mother drew  
 That caus'd his doom, and fill'd with cautious fear  
 Each Parent since, intent with curb severe,  
 To guard their Sons from evil to ensue.

### II.

Such a presentiment my heart possess'd :  
 The sad presage that labour'd in my breast,

*St. i. l. 1. As CLYMENS' Son — ] PHAETON, who, requesting from his Mother to know his true Father, prevailed upon him (the SUN) to give him his Chariot for a day, and set the World on fire. See Ovid. b. ii. fab.*

My visage dimm'd, and mark'd my inward woes,  
To my blest Guide ! and that paternal light  
Which from his glorious station took his flight,  
MINE, and the TUSCAN fortune to disclose.

III.

“ Explain your Will at large,” the VESTAL said ;  
“ For tho' in Heav'n's bright mirror full display'd,  
All thoughts that from created Souls arise  
Shine when we look aloft ; yet, to inspire  
The deep religious glow of warm desire,  
Your pray'rs you must present with heart and voice.”

IV.

“ O heav'nly Soul ! thou view'st with Angel ken,  
Plain as the clearest truths disclos'd to Men,  
Futurity's dread scenes, in formless bands,  
By us dim seen ; but manifest to thee  
In the deep visions of eternity,  
Where God's own eye the birth of Time commands.”

V.

“ In the dark Stage of Penitence below,  
And in the regions of eternal woe,  
My future fortunes were obscurely told :  
When MARO led my steps, yet Virtue's base,  
On which I stand, no coming storm shall raise,  
Whatever ills old Time may yet unfold.”

VI.

“ Refuse not, then, my future doom to show,  
Prescience may blunt the coming shaft of woe.”

Thus, at the Saint's command, my warm request  
I to the Warrior of the Skies preferr'd ;  
Mildly the CHAMPION of EMMANUEL heard,  
And in a soothing tone his Son address'd.

VII.

Not in ambiguous words he told my doom,  
As to the Nations sunk in Pagan gloom  
The Demons told before the SENT of GOD,  
The Sons of Darknes to the deep expell'd,  
And Heav'n's unrival'd clemency reveal'd,  
But in a series clear my fate foreshew'd.

VIII.

" ETERNAL PROVIDENCE your view confines  
To present things and past, the Soul divines,  
Of future scenes in vain, what WILL decrees,  
As plain as we perceive the foamy trace  
Made by the pinnacle in her liquid race,  
The uncreated eye distinctly sees,

IX.

" Yet on HIS sight the ACT no more depends,  
Than on our eyes the Zephyr that extends  
The woven canvass, and impels the weight  
Along the flood, from thence, distinct and clear,  
As the loud organ to the ravish'd ear,  
Came the dread vision of your future fate,

X.

" As youthful THESEUS, by his Stepdame's crime,  
Of old was banish'd from his native clime ;

So ARNO's banks no more shalt thou behold ;  
Thy fate the Furies weave in STYGIAN gloom,  
And HE affixts the labours of the loom,  
Who oft his SAVIOUR's blood profanely fold,

XI.

" Your fame all darken'd with imputed crimes,  
Sad exiles, you must change your native climes  
For poverty and shame, for bonds and death ;  
But Vengeance, Vengeance will o'ertake your foes !  
I see the Magazine of God disclose  
It's burning stores of long collected wrath,

XII.

" You then must bid adieu to all delight,  
This is the first keen shaft that wings its flight  
From dire affliction's bow, then soon thy taste  
Shall learn the favour of the niggard dole,  
Thy tears shall mix with the penurious bowl,  
On thy lean board by haughty Patrons plac'd,

*St. x. l. 5. HE affixts—*] BONIFACE VIII. See Hist. Flor.

*St. xi. l. 1. Your fame all darken'd —*] THESEUS, his life was attempted, and himself banished by his Stepmother MEDEA. See Ovid Metam. b. viii.

*St. xi. l. 4. But Vengeance, —*] He alludes to the Calamity which happened 1304, a few years after his Banishment ; when a large Platform raised over the ARNO, for the purpose of a public Exhibition, (it is said of the Infernal Punishments,) broke down by accident, by which means numbers lost their lives. A great Fire consumed a large part of the City the very next year.—LANDINO, VENTURI, &c.

XIII.

“ Then shall you know what steps of anxious care,  
The houseless Man that mounts a stranger’s stair  
Must count, but still more deadly stings remain,  
The thankless hearts of those with whom you fled,  
Dastards, by you in vain to glory led,  
Shall censure thee as cause of all their pain.

XIV.

“ But soon the tint of shame they strove to throw  
On thee, shall dye *their* cheeks with crimson glow;  
When thou, by self-regard and honour driv’n,  
Shalt leave them to themselves : applauding fame  
Shall stamp the action, and aloud proclaim  
Thy vindication in the face of Heav’n.

XV.

“ The Lord, whose arms the golden steps display,  
O’er which the warlike Eagle wings her way,  
On thee a kind asylum shall bestow;  
Unlike the rest, his hospitable care  
Shall save the torture of reluctant pray’r,  
Content with gratitude’ spontaneous glow.

*St. xiii. l. 4. The thankless hearts —*] He is supposed here to mean the unfortunate attempt made by the Exiles of the White Faction (to which he belonged) to take the City of FLORENCE by surprise, contrary, as it was supposed, to his advice and direction.

*St. xv. l. 1. The Lord, whose arms—*] DELLA SCALA, Prince of ROMA, the generous Patron of DANTE, is here meant; the portion of the Father was continued by the Son, CANE DELLA LA. See Life of DANTE.

XVI.

“ Here that distinguish’d Youth shall meet your eye,  
 Whose martial spirit, kindling in the Sky,  
 Flew downward, and inform’d a manly mould,  
 An unfledg’d Warrior, kingdoms yet to come  
 Shall mark his glorious deeds, and tell the sum,  
 Yet o’er him scarce nine Summer Suns have roll’d.

XVII.

“ Yet ere the GASCON shall his Lord beguile,  
 His dawn of glory on his native foil  
 Shall glow, presage full of the coming day;  
 His scorn of danger, his contempt of gain,  
 The brood of Envy shall behold with pain,  
 And with reluctant praise his worth display.

XVIII.

“ Cleave to his fortunes, soon the day shall rise  
 That sees his ensign waving in the Skies,  
 And his strong arm the fate of thousands wield;  
 Things yet behind, tho’ in eternal light  
 Beheld, must for a time be wrapt in night,  
 Yet to a mortal’s vision unreveal’d,

XIX.

“ Such is the comment on the fearful text,  
 That in the Shades below your Soul perplex’d;

*St. xvii. l. 1. Yet ere the GASCON—*] CLEMENT the FIFTH, a native of GASCONY. He was fixed in the Papacy by the intrigues of PHILIP LE BEL, king of FRANCE, and afterwards opposed him, See Hist. Flor.; and INFERNO, Canto xxvii. Notes.



Such is the ambuscade to spring so soon,  
In other Worlds foretold ; but then beware,  
Let no vindictive thought thy Soul ensnare,  
Thy foes shall fall ere many a changing Moon."

XX.

When the blest Saint so prompt a will betray'd,  
And thus the secrets of my lot display'd,  
With hand so ready, and with skill profound,  
To one with will and pow'r profusely blest,  
Boldly I ventur'd on a new request,  
And thus began the depths of fate to sound ;

XXI.

" The coming bolt, O Father ! well I see,  
And all its volly'd light'nings aim'd at me,  
More terrible when aided by despair ;  
Then, lest some hospitable door I close  
Against myself, I'll let my pen repose,  
Lest foes more num'rous join th' unequal war.

XXII.

" Deep in the vales of TARTARUS profound  
I sojourn'd long, and climb'd the lofty Mound,  
Where sad Repentance weeps her stains away ;  
Then, from that lofty Hill's sublimest height,  
Gradual I rose with CYNTHIA's rising light,  
With my fair Pilot, to the realms of Day.

*St. xxii. l. 1. Deep in the vales—*] The Poet here gives a reason,  
at least *poetically* plausible, for the variety of characters which he in-  
roduces in this Poem.

XXIII.

“ Thus, as from Star to Star I journey’d on,  
I learn’d some secrets in their radiant zone,  
Which if the clam’rous trump of flying fame  
Should catch, and round yon’ World the tidings found,  
There many an haughty heart would feel the wound,  
And mourn the poison of corroding shame.

XXIV.

“ And if a timid friend to Truth I seem,  
My fame shall vanish like an empty dream,  
Before succeeding years my Name record ;  
As when a golden mirror meets the Sun,  
With such a glance the heav’nly Maid begun,  
And broke indignant on th’ unfinish’d word.

XXV.

“ A Conscience, loaded with the weight of crimes,  
It’s own, or others, well may dread your rhymes ;  
But let victorious Truth her Standard wave  
Thro’ all the triple World, from zone to zone,  
Be all the wonders of your voyage known,  
And he that feels the lash may loudly rave,

XXVI.

“ They who with patience from thy hand endure  
The bitter potion, soon may boast a cure ;

*St. xxvi. l. 1. They who with patience, &c.] A good defence of satire in general ; whether it will apply to personal satire, is not so clear : but, to Posterity, its moral effect will be nearly the same. It possesses a great superiority over the visions of PIERA*

Directed well, its energy pervades  
The springs of moral life, and bids them play  
With vigour new, as when the vernal ray  
With vital spirit fills the op'ning glades.

XXVII.

“ Your Song must, like the ruffling Storm, assail  
The tow'ring Hill, and spare the lowly Vale,  
And deal forth honour or eternal flame  
To Sinners, and to Saints of high degree ;  
Be like yourself, ingenuous, bold, and free,  
And lofty deeds in lofty notes proclaim,

XXVIII.

“ Ghosts of renown alone, thy LEADER show'd,  
In Heav'n, on Earth, or by the STYGIAN flood ;  
For those are they who spread th' example wide,  
And show what course to shun, and what pursue :  
With noble patterns from the nameless crew,  
Ingenuous natures rarely are supply'd.”

---

FLOWMAN in every respect, particularly in this, that in the latter the personages are generally some abstract ideas personified under the name of Covetousness, &c. which are not by any means so interesting as the real characters introduced by DANTE, who by this means gives us, as in a Poetical CAMERA OBSCURA, a living Picture of the Times in which he wrote.

St. xxviii. l. 1. — *thy* LEADER,] VIRGIL.

END OF THE SEVENTEENTH CANTO.

Phyllis

## CANTO THE EIGHTEENTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

The Poet ascends to the Planet JUPITER, where he sees the Spirits of those who had administered justice on earth in a conspicuous manner, drawn up and marshalled in emblematical form, of a very singular appearance.

---

**T**HE heav'nly CHAMPION stood, absorpt in thought,  
While pond'ring in my Mind the various lot  
Foretold, its evil with its good I weigh'd ;  
But SHE, who led me to the Seat of God,  
Exclaim'd, " Awake thee from this pensive mood,  
That Throne is near which wrong can ne'er invade."

### II.

At her harmonious voice around I turn'd ;  
Heav'ns! with what love intense her aspect burn'd.  
I saw, what I despair on Earth to show ;  
Not less my style the subject should debase,  
But mortal Mem'ry fails the scene to trace,  
Unless some heav'nly Guide its help bestow.

III.

This, and this only, I remember well ;  
 Discontented Souls tempestuous swell,  
     Sunk to a sacred calm ; as when the smile  
 Of rising HESPER lulls the raging deep.  
 Thus all my anxious cares were laid asleep,  
     Nor Passion dar'd my bosom to embroil.

IV.

The bright reflex of uncreated light,  
 Such cheerful radiance glanc'd upon my sight,  
     From her mild aspect, still my eyes could dwell  
 On her bright charms, with looks of sparkling joy :  
 " ALL HEAV'N," she cry'd, " is not within my eye ;  
     Look up, where other scenes the Saints reveal."

V.

As oft in mortal mask of Day we spy  
 The kindling Soul, collected in the eye,  
     If any domineering passion wake  
 The dormant pow'rs ; so in the awful face  
 Of the paternal Sage, I well could trace  
     Th' unfated with my converse to partake.

VI.

" To this fifth stage," he said, " of endless joy,  
 Where the great STEM OF BEING, o'er the Sky  
     Sees its interminable boughs extend,  
 From HADES to th' eternal Throne display'd,  
 With foliage clad, which ne'er is known to fade,  
     The Souls of genuine Heroes still ascend.

VII.

“ Bright theme of many a muse ; they wing their flight  
To this bright province of empyreal light,  
Wafted by Pæans of eternal praise :  
Now watch the wings of that extended Train,  
Which in cros columns overshade the plain,  
And spy the movements of the running maze.

VIII.

“ When any radiant Chieftain hears his Name,  
Forth from his station, like careering flame,  
His Spirit issues in a stream of light,  
As bolted fire that vollies from a cloud.”  
JOSHUA he call'd, and soon amid the crowd,  
The radiant Sun-Controller flash'd to fight.

IX.

Soon as the Name of MACCABÆUS rung  
Thro' the thick files, at once the sacred Throng  
Disparting, shew'd the Warrior in the van,  
Moving in measure to the magic found ;  
As when the sportive Orb is whirl'd around,  
The Champion in a fiery circle ran.

X.

As the fix'd eye pursues the Falcon's flight,  
Lanc'd like twin Meteors, o'er the fields of Light,

*St. viii. l. 6. The radiant Sun-Controller—*] JOSHUA, who said  
to the Sun, “ STAND THOU STILL ON GIBSON,” &c. Joshua, x.

Great PEPIN's Son, and ROLAND, met my view;  
 WILLIAM, RINOARDO, kindling in their course;  
 Purfu'd, and he that led his levy'd Pow'rs  
 To JORDAN's flood, against the PAYNIM Crew.

XI.

The mighty NORMAN, like a gliding Star,  
 Sprung from the tent, wide o'er the field afar,  
 Whene'er the noble TUSCAN gave the sign;  
 But soon the Chief, returning to his post,  
 Amongst his Comrades in the heav'nly Host,  
 Join'd, in grave melody, the martial line.

XII.

Then to the heav'nly MAID I turn'd, to know  
 Her next command, and saw her aspect glow,  
 As some new image of empyreal joy,  
 Another Spirit to the Saint had giv'n,  
 Like some bright Inmate of an higher Heav'n  
 She look'd, she walk'd, she fir'd me with her eye.

XIII.

As, with increasing worth our joys increase,  
 And some new earnest of eternal peace,  
 Each day with purer beams illumines the Mind:  
 Still bright'ning onward, like th' advancing Spring,  
 Thus rose my Spirits on excursive wing,  
 And seem'd to soar in regions less confin'd.

*St. x. l. 3. Great PEPIN's Son, and ROLAND,]* Nephew of CHAR-  
 LEMAGNE. The Hero of BOIENDO and ARIOSTO.

*St. x. l. 4. WILLIAM, RINOARDO,]* Counts of AUVERGNE,  
 Father and Son, Adventurers in different Crusades.

*St. x. l. 5. he that led—]* GODFREY DE BOUILLON.



XIV.

Quick as the roses leave a Matron's face,  
When bloodless fear her pallid flag displays,  
And quells the tint of shame, the ruddy glow  
Of MARS, in transient glory past away ;  
And Jove's pale circle shed a milder day  
O'er the wide Sky, in soft ELYSIAN flow.

XV.

Here new displays of everlasting love  
I spy'd, and burning words, that seem'd to move  
Round in the wond'rous dialect of Heav'n :  
Spontaneous glories wove immortal strains,  
O'er all the surface of th' etherial plains,  
Like meteor's glancing o'er the face of Even.

XVI.

As soaring from the Lake, the plummy Throng  
Applaud their feast with many a tuneful song,  
And now the liquid air in circles skim,  
And 'mid the clouds in seried files combine,  
Or scour the welkin in a lengthen'd line,  
So mov'd the Saints, and such their solemn hymn.

*St. xv. l. 1. Here new displays, &c.]* I took the liberty here of giving the ideas of the Poet in a general dress, as in my opinion better adapted to modern taste, than the BIZARRE imagery in the original, where the Spirits are described as delineating by their flight the several letters in the words DILIGITE JUSTITIAM, in a long prosaic detail,

— Jaccenfi

or *D* her *I* her *L* in sua figura, &c.

And pausing at the end of each word and sentence, in such proportions as to ascertain the sense. All which is described at length, and gravely expounded, by BEATRICE.

XVII.

Thus in mid air, by art celestial taught,  
Some glowing image of each rising thought  
They form'd, and often paus'd, to give the eye  
Of Mortals time the mystic scene to scan;  
Then once again the harmony began,  
Again the Picture floated o'er the Sky.

XVIII.

Hear me, immortal QUEEN ! whose godlike rage  
Catches the transient scenes of ev'ry age,  
Recall'd to being by the soul of Song ;  
By thee, Imperial States and deeds of Fame,  
New life and never-dying honours claim,  
Kept by angelic strains for ever young.

XIX.

So let me call this high empyreal scene  
To second life ; and grant, celestial QUEEN !  
Thy deathless Spirit to my sinking strain ;  
Evolving many a maze, the radiant Choir  
Still sung, and still, in characters of fire,  
Describ'd the duties of the ruling Train.

XX.

In contrast then oppos'd, like Light and Shade,  
Tyrannic and benignant deeds display'd  
Their pageants, and alternate smil'd or frown'd :  
There awful Justice sate with look severe,  
With one strong hand he struck the guilty Peer,  
The other rais'd the Suppliant from the ground.

XXI.

BUSIRIS and AURELIUS met my eye,  
Two hostile Names opposing in the Sky,  
And many a scene, that o'er the moony light  
Of this fair Planet shed a golden gleam :  
Oft pausing, they resum'd the lofty theme,  
Singing the everlasting Source of right.

XXII.

Soon, from the welkin, in a lucid ring,  
Another Band, descending on the wing,  
I saw, and mingling with the Saints below ;  
Then, as a stream of sparkles mounts the wind,  
A Party soar'd, and left the rest behind,  
Some swiftly failing, some advancing slow.

XXIII.

By various influence of th' eternal ray,  
To diff'rent heights along th' ærial way  
They seem'd to soar ; then, banding on the gale,  
Their lucid phalanx form'd before my eyes,  
Like JOVE's gigantic BIRD, that cleft the Skies,  
And bore the TROJAN from th' IDEAN vale.

XXIV.

Yet seem'd the fiery Phantom incomplete,  
But soon another Band was seen to fleet ;  
(That Band which in a mazy measure rode,  
Circling in cadence to the hymn below ;)  
Upward they seem'd in airy stream to go,  
By the strong impulse of the breath of God.

XXV.

Wife was the ruling hand that seem'd to guide  
 This airy Cavalcade, the clouds to ride,  
 And swell, with new supplies, the giant form;  
 Mounting aloft, they pass'd the fiery van,  
 And, spreading o'er the face of day, began  
 To shape the wings with many a flying swarm.

XXVI.

" All hail, thou sacred Light! instinctive flame!  
 Form'd in the Sky by many a living gem,  
 Whose influence here below illumines the Pole  
 With sacred love of right; the means bestow,  
 To mark and fly the STYGIAN fume below,  
 Which damp our flight to your ethereal goal.

XXVII.

" O, that the holy hand the scourge would take,  
 And lash the caitiff Crew to LIMBO's Lake,  
 That, in her sacred Temple, buy and sell  
 EMMANUEL's gift for gold! Ye Sons of Day,  
 That soar above, for these poor Sinners pray,  
 Led blindfold down Perdition's flow'ry vale!

XXVIII.

" Well-temper'd steel our Fathers us'd in fight,  
 OUR Priests are peaceful, but with holy spite  
 Deny those hallow'd cates, that heav'nly food,  
 Which Heav'n left free to all to feed the Soul;  
 But this base Tribe the gracious boon control,  
 And strive to intercept the gen'ral good.

*St. xxviii. l. 2. OUR Priests, &c.] The denial of the Cup to  
 the Laity.*

XXIX.

“ But thou, unholy Priest ! whose craft abhorr’d  
 Perverts the tenor of the sacred word ;  
 The faintly Pair that water’d with their gore  
 That Vineyard, which your impious hands perfume  
 To spoil, are yet alive to seal your doom,  
 And snatch you hence from your ill-purchas’d store.”

XXX.

You well may say, “ I find no inward call  
 To fish with PETER, or make tents with PAUL ;  
 Him I prefer, who, on the dancing Dame,  
 His head bestow’d ; that HEAD is more to me  
 Than all the reliques from th’ ATLANTIC sea,  
 To that where SOL resumes his morning flame.”

*St. xxix. l. x. —unholy Priest ! ] BONIFACE VIII.*

END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CANTO.



## CANTO THE NINETEENTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

Discussion of the Question, " Whether they who have not the Benefit of Revelation can be saved ?"

---

THE PAGEANT stooping low, on easy sail,  
Hung full in view : while to the ELYSIAN gale  
The banded Choirs their heav'nly ditty thrill'd ;  
Cloth'd in such splendour as the ruby shows,  
When SOL's collected light intensely glows  
Within the stone, with sanguine radiance fill'd.

### II.

The sudden flash my earthly eyes o'ercame,  
Whilst accents more than mortal seem'd to claim  
My ravish'd ear, as if by magic Pow'r,  
The giant Vision which before me spread,  
By wond'rous organ to my sense convey'd  
Sounds, by no human audience heard before.

III.

Like some sweet plummy harmonist on high,  
 Whose matin song salutes the glowing Sky,  
     From wing to wing the heav'nly Music ran,  
 Aloft the tuneful periods seem'd to float  
 Thro' the still air in many an heav'nly note,  
     And thus, at last, the wond'rous Shape began :

IV.

“ For just designs, and many an holy deed,  
 Thus plum'd with heav'nly life aloft I lead  
     This glorious cavalcade thro' show'rs of joy,  
 That leave no wish unfill'd ; the tribes below,  
 Tho' blind as moles, with awful rev'rence bow,  
     Our worth acknowledge, but our guidance fly.

V.

“ As from unnumber'd torches waving high,  
 One stream of radiance floating o'er the Sky,  
     Paints the dun clouds ; ev'n so the tuneful strain  
 Of many a single Voice, distinct and sweet  
 Compos'd, aloft in Æther, seem'd to meet,  
     Articulate and full, above the plain.”

VI.

“ O ye !” I cry'd, “ that like th' ELYSIAN bloom  
 Of endless transport shed a soft perfume,  
     In such a Zephyr as fore-runs the Morn  
 Of blest Eternity : O condescend !  
 That famine of the Spirit to suspend,  
     Which in my Soul intensely seems to burn.



VII.

“ For well I know, that, if the Worlds that run  
 Their circuit far beneath th’ empyreal Sun,  
     Hail the reflexion of eternal Light ;  
 You that so far within his noon-tide ray  
 Refide in blifs, must drink a purer day  
     Where no invidious vapour dims your sight.

VIII.

“ You well can see, with what attentive heed  
 I stand, and try with sharpen’d sight to read  
     Above, the answer to my warm request.”  
 As when the unhooded Falcon sees with joy  
 Light, and with wing unfurl’d salutes the Sky,  
     Its transport thus the starry Form exprefs’d:

IX.

“ With such clear PÆANS, o’er the liquid space  
 Sail’d the long triumph of eternal Grace,  
     Of ransom’d souls compos’d, and shew’d afar  
 Signs of augmented joy, respondent Choirs,  
 Such holy strains began, as Heav’n inspires,  
     When to new Souls her beamy gates unbar.

X.

“ That Pow’r omnific,” thus the Voice began,  
 “ Whose golden compass such a circuit ran,  
     Thro’ the wide boundaries of vacant space,  
 And call’d Creation from the womb of Night,  
 Is bounteous still, or frugal of his light,  
     As fits the purpose of eternal Grace.

XI.

“ Yet, tho’ the Image of th’ eternal Mind  
Gave all its fov’rign stamp, yet unconfin’d,  
And ever unemploy’d, beyond the bound  
Of matter and of space, a fund remains,  
Still new, of energy in him that reigns,  
Hid in th’ abyfs of Entity profound.

XII.

“ Portions of this to each created pow’r  
His bounty gives, if, on th’ appointed hour,  
They wait, and rightly use what he bestows ;  
The first that ’gainst his sov’reign Lord rebell’d,  
Aspir’d, before his time, (by pride impell’d,)  
To seize the boon, and sunk to endless woes.

XIII.

“ To no inferior Nature can be giv’n,  
To taste the full munificence of Heav’n ;  
Nor infinite in finite bounds is held,  
Sole measure of itself ; our mortal fight  
(A cloudy ray of uncreated light)  
Is by this awful prospect still repell’d.

XIV.

“ No farther can our mental optics pierce  
His essence pure, who fram’d the universe,  
Than in the azure deep our glance can go,  
Tho’ near the shore, we soon descry the sand,  
The bottom mocks our sight, when far from land,  
Tho’ stable as the mountain’s breezy brow.

NOU

XV.

“ No light can be, but from a source serene,  
In vain you look, if vapours intervene  
By passion rais’d, ’tis easy hence to tell  
From whence so many doubts are seen to rise  
In your dim Soul, like mists that hide the Skies  
(Exhal’d from dregs terrene) with cloudy veil.

XVI.

“ I see what thoughts your working Mind divide,  
You wonder why the Soul by GANGES side  
Is doom’d, altho’ he never heard the name  
Of CHRIST, yet listens to the God within,  
(Guide of his blameless steps,) and flees from Sin,  
By Nature led, and Reason’s sov’reign claim.

XVII.

“ Beyond the Christian pale he breath’d his last :—  
Why is his guiltless Soul to HADES cast ?  
Can sov’reign Justice breathe so hard a doom ?  
Why for inevitable mis-belief  
Is the pure Sage dismiss’d, and virtuous Chief,  
For ever more to wail in STYGIAN gloom ?

XVIII.

“ But, who art thou,” it said, “ who dar’st to climb  
The seat of judgment, and thro’ space and time,  
With feeble eyes that only reach a span,  
To search ?—If Scripture light had ne’er been giv’n,  
Vain were it to explore the will of Heav’n,  
A privilege beyond the reach of Man.

XIX.

“ O earthly Minds ! to darknefs ever prone !  
 Th’ Almighty Being in himfelf alone  
 Complete, to fov’reign good attentive ftill,  
 To that primæval fcope for ever tends,  
 And portion’d blifs with fov’reign Juftice blends;  
 In the pure effence of th’ eternal Will.

XX.

“ Thither can no created thing afpire,  
 Unlefs that influence of the plaftic Sire  
 That fills the Mind with vigour new, be giv’n.”  
 As to the foft’ring Bird, her callow brood . . .  
 Look up with grateful eye, when fill’d with food,  
 So I rever’d the Meflenger of Heav’n.

XXI.

Spangl’d with living gems, it feem’d to fpread  
 The ample vans, and thus in Thunder faid :  
 “ The paths of Juftice, as my words to thee,  
 Are far beyond thy depth.” Then all around . . .  
 Begun from wing to wing a folemn found,  
 In one loud chant of heav’nly harmony.

XXII.

The Vifion fpread, diftinct with many a Star,  
 Like that fam’d Enfign, terrible in war,  
 Which o’er the trembling world victorious Rome  
 Terrific hung ; and thus began again  
 The fov’reign Voice : “ To fee this bleft domain,  
 None but the ranfom’d in all ages come.

XXIII.

“ Ere MARY’S SON distain’d the sacred wood,  
And in all ages since, his streaming blood  
All Souls redeems, that genuine Faith display;  
But many on his Name with boldness call,  
Who underneath his righteous doom shall fall,  
When virtuous PAGANS soar to endless day.

XXIV.

“ Such HYPOCRITES the NABATHEAN Band  
Shall see with scorn, where rang’d on either hand  
The ghostly Flocks for ever shall divide,  
Those to eternal joys in Heav’n’s domain,  
And these to tenements of endless pain,  
When the strong FIAT parts the living tide.”

XXV.

The SOPHI then shall scorn the Sons of ROME,  
When that dread volume shall decide their doom,  
That clear, as Summer’s noon, their duty show’d;  
Proud ALBERT then shall see the roll expand,  
And the dread movement of that awful hand  
That writes his sentence for BOHEMIAN blood.

. St. xxiii. l. 1. *Ere MARY’S SON—*] See Mat. vii. That the merits of our Saviour’s Death will extend even to virtuous Heathens, appears from many texts of Scripture, particularly Romans, v. and from St. Paul’s declaration, that *THEY also do the things of the law*. See PARADISO, Canto vii. Notes.

St. xxiv. l. 1. — *the NABATHEAN Band*] The PAGANS of Southern AFRICA. He probably alludes to the text, “the Queen of the SOUTH shall rise in judgment against this Generation.”

St. xxv. l. 4. *Proud ALBERT—*] ALBERT of AUSTRIA invaded BOHEMIA, and laid PRAGUE in ashes, 1303, without any claim or sufficient cause. See PURGATORIO, Canto vi. Notes.

XXVI.

PHILIP shall then his coining fraud deplore,  
In louder strains than when the tusky boar  
    Stumbled his steed ; SEQUANA's banks return'd,  
The proud discordant BRITONS then shall know  
For what a prize they caus'd their fields to flow  
    With hundreds' blood, so oft' by ALBION mourn'd.

XXVII.

“ IBERIA, then, her luxuries shall weep ;  
Then the BOHEMIAN, from his torpid sleep,  
    In horror shall awake, and mourn his days  
Unvalu'd, misemploy'd : and SALEM's heir  
Shall see one guiltless mark his worth declare,  
    While his foul crimes the sacred page deface.

*St. xxvi. l. 1. PHILIP —*] PHILIP LE BEL of FRANCE, being defeated by the GERMANS at the great battle of COURTRAY in FLANDERS, and obliged to reinforce his army at great expence, caused his troops to be paid with base money, to the great injury not only of the whole kingdom but of Foreigners. He was killed in hunting by a fall from his horse.—LANDINO. VELLUTELLO.

*St. xxvi. l. 5. For what a prize, &c.]* Wars of Scotland and England, in the times of EDWARD the FIRST and SECOND of England.

*St. xxvii. l. 1. IBERIA, then, her luxuries, &c.]* ALPHONSO, king of Spain, a Prince abandoned to luxury ; as was also WENCESLAUS, king of Bohemia, mentioned here. The invasion of BOHEMIA by ALBERT, noticed above, happened in his time.

*St. xxvii. l. 4. —SALEM's heir]* CHARLES II. of SICILY, descended from the Kings of JERUSALEM. See PURGATORIO, Canto xx. See also PARADISO, Canto viii. Notes.

XXVIII.

“ That Caitiff then, his avarice shall rue,  
And all his vileness, whom TRINACRIA knew,  
Where old ANCHISES rests in hallow’d mold,  
Tho’ ÆTNA flam’d at hand with vengeful ire,  
He fear’d not *then* her cataracts of Fire,  
So hot, within, he felt the thirst of gold.

XXIX.

“ A darker page his giant deeds shall claim,  
Deep glowing, to express the culprit’s shame,  
There, too, the brother Kings their fate shall know,  
When ARRAGON and sad MAJORCA mourn,  
Two glorious crowns of old, now stain’d with scorn,  
Their thrones disgrace, their kingdoms overthrow.

XXX.

NORWEGIA’s Monarch, with the TUSCAN King,  
Their smother’d guest shall then severely sting ;

*St. xxviii. l. 2. TRINACRIA,*] FREDERIC of ARRAGON, who succeeded his Father, PETER of ARRAGON, in SICILY, whose inhabitants he grievously oppressed.

*St. xxix. l. 1. When ARRAGON,—*] JAMES, King of ARRAGON, Uncle to the preceding FREDERIC, and JAMES, King of MAJORCA, his Brother, are here meant. His Son JAMES II. King of MAJORCA, was the third Husband of the famous JOAN, Queen of NAPLES. SUMMOUNTIE Hist. Neap.

*St. xxx. l. 1. NORWEGIA’s Monarch, &c.]* NORWEGIA, LUFIA, or PORTUGAL. The characters of these kings are not given by any Commentator, nor of the King of SCLAVONIA mentioned here; only that his crime was issuing base coin, in imitation of the Venetian Ducats.—LANDINO, &c.

SCLAVONIA too, the burning stamp shall feel,  
 With which he falsified VENETIA's coin :  
 O blest HUNGARIA ! if your King resign  
 His crown, and from the coming vengeance steal.

XXXI.

“ Happy NAVARRE ! if proud PIRENE's brow,  
 With its deep frown could check the coming foe ;  
 NICOSEA too, and FAMAGOSTA's bands,  
 Lament their lot ; they soon the lance must wield,  
 For their fierce Tyrant in the bloody field,  
 Against more blameless foes from other lands.”

*St. xxx. l. 5. O blest HUNGARIA ! —*] At that time governed by  
 a succession of bad kings.—LANDINO, VELLUTELLO, &c.

*St. xxxi. l. 1. Happy NAVARRE ! —*] A province of SPAIN, on  
 the confines of FRANCE, and at that time oppressed by PHILIP LE  
 BEL.

*St. xxxi. l. 3. NICOSEA too, and FAMAGOSTA —*] HENRY II.  
 King of CYPRUS, was a Prince of very dissolute morals.—*Istoria*  
*di Re Lusignani de Cipro*, par Henrico Giblet, *citata* de ANGEL-  
 LUCCI.

END OF THE NINETEENTH CANTO.



## CANTO THE TWENTIETH.

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### ARGUMENT.

Praises of several virtuous Kings.—The Subject of the Title of  
Heathens to Salvation, resumed.

---

WHEN he, that views the world with bright survey,  
Over the vast ATLANTIC rolls away,  
And Light's faint rear pursues his setting beam  
In glimm'ring files ; soon, o'er the waste domain  
Of Heav'n, old Night asserts her shadowy reign,  
And Stars unnumber'd round her axle gleam.

### II.

Thus, changing like the World's majestic scene,  
Where varied Light and Darkness intervene,  
Alternate Victors, now, like dusky Night,  
The Vision hung ; but from its shadow soon,  
As from a pale Eclipse the silver Moon,  
It seem'd new kindling with excursive light.

III.

Thick flashing beam on beam, the heav'nly Host,  
That on long lines of Light its form compos'd,  
    Began so solemn and so sweet a lay,  
And such deep mystic sense the song convey'd,  
Which the perfections of their Lord display'd,  
    That Mem'ry's feeble fence was borne away.

IV.

O sacred Love! reward of earthly toils,  
Cloth'd in the deep serene of heav'nly smiles,  
    Or in the glorious robe of kindling joy,  
What were thy triumphs here! how brightly shone  
Thy Pupils, hov'ring o'er the ample Zone  
    Of JOVE, in his majestic march on high!

V.

Now the loud Chorus of the Sky was still,  
When a soft sound, as of a murm'ring rill,  
    Tuning from steep to steep its gentle fall,  
As if it meant in liquid lapse to sing  
The treasures of its clear, perennial spring,  
    And to the song its list'ning Naiads call.

VI.

As where the chords upon the sound-board meet,  
Or thro' the Flute's soft vent, in slow retreat,  
    Collect, and flit in tuneful strains away;  
Thus from the Vision, like a dying breeze,  
Whose gentle motion waves the slumb'ring trees,  
    A soft ELYSIAN whisper seem'd to play.

VII.

Yet, in distinct and modulated note,  
 Those accents seem'd in middle air to float :  
 “ High-favour'd Man ! this wond'rous Form survey:  
 See, how its gemmy wings obscure the Sky ;  
 See, how it lifts its regal head on high,  
 And rolls its eyes, that shed a brighter day.

VIII.

“ That Light, which mortal Men the PUPIL call,  
 Full in the centre of the beamy ball,  
 Is he, that to the holy Spirit sung  
 Immortal pæans to the trembling lyre,  
 And led, preceded by the hallow'd Choir,  
 Thro' plaufive Tribes, the Ark of God along.

IX.

“ His Song's immortal meed he learns above,  
 Not by the laurel, but by heav'nly love,  
 And transport in its full extent, repaid ;  
 The hallow'd Band you see in circle bright,  
 That seem a GUARD to this distinguish'd Light;  
 The FIRST, the mourning Widow's wish obey'd.

*St. viii. l. 1. That Light, &c.]* The principal Spirits of those that compose the form of the EAGLE represented here, are described as stationed round the EYE, of which DAVID is the centre.

*St. ix. l. 6. The FIRST,]* TRAJAN rescued (as the Legends say) from the Infernal Regions, by the prayers of GREGORY the Great, on account of his patience under the Widow's reproof, and the impartial justice administered to her. See PURGATORIO, Canto x. Notes.

X.

“ Now, well the Warrior knows how dear it cost,  
Heav’n to renounce, and join the Stygian host ;  
For long he sojourn’d with the sentenc’d Crew.  
The King that shines beside, is he whose pray’r  
Held Death’s uplifted arm suspense in air,  
While rosy health return’d with vigour new.

XI.

“ Here he too learns, that heav’nly judgment still  
Obeys the mandate of th’ eternal Will  
Unchangeable ; altho’ a pious pray’r  
May seem a while to check the circling ray,  
And in its race suspend the fatal day,  
To cheer the haggard eye of wan Despair.

XII.

“ That SAINT, commingling beams with him, is he  
That made Imperial ROME the servile fee  
Of haughty Prelates, and to GREECE retir’d,  
Carrying the trophied palm of conquest o’er  
From hallow’d TYBER to the PONTIC shore,  
Long by mistaken piety inspir’d.

*St. x. l. 4. The King—*] HEZEKIAH, whose life was miraculously prolonged. See 2 Kings, xx.

*St. xii. l. 1. That Saint—*] CONSTANTINE.—His pretended donation to the Church is here alluded to. See PARADISO, Canto vi. Note 1.

XIII.

“ The LIGHT that shines below the hallow’d Four,  
Is he whom SICILY’s lost Sons deplore ;  
They mourn his fate, nor less lament the life  
Of FREDERICK, and of CHARLES, invet’rate foes,  
Whose deadly feud the breath of ATE blows,  
Staining her flow’ry fields with civil strife.

XIV.

“ See! what a diadem the Monarch wears !  
See what a radiant Train his worth reveres,  
Yet half eclips’d by his superior blaze !  
And who, in yonder wand’ring world below,  
Would think a Pagan here could lift his brow,  
RIPHEUS, the just, renown’d in MARO’s lays ?

XV.

“ He sees that splendour of supernal grace,  
Which from the ancient world conceal’d its face ;  
Yet, tho’ exalted on this ’vantage ground,  
The depth of bounty mocks his eagle sight,  
Dazzled and ’wilder’d in a flood of light,  
Or in the bright obscure absorpt and drown’d.”

*St. xiii. l. 1. The LIGHT—*] WILLIAM the Good, the second of that name in SICILY, of the NORMAN LINE. (See Hist. Flor.) After many revolutions, it became the scene of war and oppression, during the contest between the Houses of ANJOU and ARRAGON ; particularly in the times of CHARLES I. and II. of ANJOU, PETER of ARRAGON, and FREDERICK his Son.

*St. xiv. l. 6. RIPHEUS*] Described by VIRGIL as the most perfect character among the TROJANS, *Æn. ii.*

—Justissimus unus

Qui fuit in Teucris, et servantissimus æqui.

XVI.

Soon as a Lark that chants the rising dawn,  
Then from her anthem on the dewy lawn  
    Rests for a while, and seems with joy replete;  
So seem'd the Image resting from its toil,  
Basking it stood on Heav'n's eternal smile,  
    Whose mighty mandate Chance can ne'er defeat.

XVII.

Tho' conscious that my inmost Soul was known,  
Clear as the vivid tints thro' chrystal shown,  
    To this bright Band; yet, could I not refrain;  
So much the question seem'd my Mind to press:  
"What things, O all ye Saints above, are these?"  
    When a new dawn of joy illum'd the Train.

XVIII.

Then, 'midst a flame of kindling zeal, began  
The Voice to end my doubts: "High-favour'd Man!  
    Your steadfast Faith I see; but still, to know  
The means by which these wonders are fulfill'd  
Inflames your wish, in heav'nly things unskill'd,  
    Unless from empty Shadows seen below.

XIX.

"You seem like Children, who the names can learn  
Of things, but fail their nature to discern  
    'Till disciplin'd; but this you have been told:  
Love thro' the heav'nly Bar can force its way,  
And take by storm the citadel of Day;  
    Heav'n often seems by heav'nly Love controll'd.

XX.

“ But not as Men to Men reluctant yield  
The day, for Heav’n spontaneous gives the field,  
Because it loves by LOVE to be o’er-come.  
You wonder much the FIRST and FIFTH to find  
In this fair Orb, for angel Choirs design’d,  
But they were Converts, ere they met their doom.

XXI.

“ Deep thro’ th’ abyfs of Time, the Foremost view’d  
Th’ incarnate SAVIOUR, and his streaming blood :  
The other, with a backward glance, beheld  
The tragic scene that on MORIAH past,  
Call’d by his SAVIOUR from the STYGIAN waste,  
Where stubborn Men in penal bonds are held.

XXII.

“ His Intercessor’s words, with wing sublime,  
Made such an inroad in th’ empyreal clime,  
That Heav’n submitted to a Mortal’s pray’r:  
Again the Spirit pass’d the STYGIAN bound,  
Again on Earth a mortal body found,  
And breath’d thro’ organs frail its native air.

*St. xx. l. 4. —the FIRST and FIFTH to find] TRAJAN and RIPHEUS.*

The Poet here shows the prevalence of CHARITY, or true Benevolence, in procuring eternal happiness, called by St. PAUL, *Faith that worketh by Love.*

*St. xxii. l. 4. Again the Spirit, &c.]* The Soul of TRAJAN is here supposed to have animated another Body, and to have been born a second time of Christian Parents.

XXIII.

“ The font baptifmal, and the holy rite,  
 Tho’ late return’d, the Denizen of Night,  
     Blefs’d with the knowledge of a Saviour’s Name,  
 Which in his bofom woke fo deep a glow,  
 That he, late fentenc’d to eternal woe,  
     Equall’d the Martyr’s heav’n-aspiring flame.

XXIV.

The other Sage, on IDA’s lofty hill,  
 Found fuch an heav’nly fteam of grace diftil  
     On his rapt Soul from that perennial Source,  
 By Mortals never feen, that Virtue’s form  
 Flafh’d on his Mind with fuch ætherial charm,  
     As to an Angel rais’d a Mortal’s pow’rs.

XXV.

“ His eye, on Juftice and on Mercy bent,  
 Saw in th’ abyfs of Light the deep intent  
     Of Heav’n, till all Redemption flood difplay’d.  
 His Spirit, rifing like the dawn of Day  
 Spontaneous, purg’d the STYGIAN fume away,  
     Emerging glorious from the murky Shade.

XXVI.

“ He ftrve to pour the beam of heav’nly Light  
 On thofe ill-omen’d Souls enwrap in Night,  
     By thofe three Nymphs that, on the dexter fide,  
 You faw attend the facred Car, that wheel’d  
 Before the PAGEANT o’er the flow’ry field,  
     A thoufand years before EMMANUEL dy’d.



XXVII.

“ O boundless view ! commanding things to come,  
In Possibility's capacious womb  
Each in its cause involv'd ; how deep, how strange,  
Art thou ! as far beyond the mental ken  
Of the first Seraph, as the last of Men,  
Whose thought, in vain, o'er all creation range.

XXVIII.

“ Yet is our ignorance a source of joy ;  
For, to the will of HIM who sits on high  
Our will with double transport we resign ;  
By Faith conducted, not by mortal fight,  
And purify our will by heav'nly Light,  
That defecate the human to divine.”

XXIX.

Thus thrilling sweet, I heard the sacred sound,  
Guiding my mental fight thro' Heav'n's profound,  
And breathing thro' my Soul a sacred calm,  
That cures all mental plagues ; and as the string  
Responsive vibrates to the Choirs that sing,  
My heart's deep measure match'd the hallow'd psalm.

XXX.

Thus, in the progress of the heav'nly Ode,  
Still, as their Names were heard, the Seraphs glow'd

*St. xxviii. l. 1. Yet is our ignorance, &c.] That we walk here  
by Faith, not by Sight, gives some degree of virtue to our obedience,  
which, if we saw eternal things more clearly, would not be the case ;  
under such an over-powering influence, the activity of the Mind  
would be destroyed. See Prel. Disc. to the PURGATORIO.*

Alternate with the tints of love and joy :  
So from their lucid ranks, I saw advance,  
Like two bright eyes, with consentaneous glance,  
The Saint of TYBER, and the Sage of TROY.

*St. xxx. l. 6. The Saint of TYBER, and the Sage of TROY.] TRA-*  
JAN and RIPHEUS.

END OF THE TWENTIETH CANTO.

## CANTO THE TWENTY-FIRST.

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### ARGUMENT.

Passage to the Planet SATURN, where the Poet finds the Spirits of the Contemplatists.—The Manner of ascending to the Eighth Sphere, or Starry Heaven, described.

---

BENT were my eyes upon th' immortal face  
 Of my Soul's Idol with a steadfast gaze ;  
 The circling splendour seem'd to swim away  
 As in a trance, and not a smile was seen  
 Benign, but grave appear'd the beauteous Queen,  
 As when a solemn shade involves the Day.

### II.

“ Wonder not at my sober cheer,” she said ;  
 “ If now my inborn transport were display'd,  
 Kindling my raptur'd glance : oppress'd with light,  
 (Like her, whom fable sings, belov'd by Jove)  
 Annihilated by excess of LOVE,  
 Your clay would turn to cinders at the sight.

*St. ii. l. 4. —belov'd by Jove] SEMELE. Ovid. Metam. iii.*

III.

“ At every splendid stage my charms increafe,  
Still as we mount aloft by due degrees,  
    ’Till Heav’n’s empyreal Throne we reach at laft ;  
Unless a welcome throwd involv’d my rays,  
Your mortal effence in th’ empyreal blaze [blast.  
    Would shrink, like leaves that feel the Lightning’s

IV.

“ Now on the seventh revolving World we light,  
Beneath the LION’s glance revolving bright,  
    Their blended influence rules the winged hours.  
Look forward now, and in this Mirror try  
What new discoveries, in an higher Sky,  
    Call to a nobler task your mental pow’rs.”

V.

He, whose enlight’ned Soul my joy can prove  
When with rapt glance I met her looks of love,  
    Can judge what grateful favour wing’d my will  
Her orders to perform. Obedience, weigh’d  
With love, so smoothly in the balance play’d,  
    That each in turn was rapture to fulfil.

VI.

Amid that splendid house of God’s, which bears  
The Name of him who blest the golden years  
    With happiness that Envy could not see  
And live, a range of golden steps began ;  
But far beyond my sight its summit ran  
    Up the high Temple of Eternity.

VII.

Of light compact appear'd each lofty stair,  
 While far above, inflaming all the air,  
 As if the wand'ring lights of Heav'n combin'd  
 Downward to point one overwhelming beam,  
 Angels descended in continuous stream,  
 And empty left the courts of Heav'n behind.

VIII.

As when AURORA's blush adorns the East,  
 The plummy inmates of the calow nest  
 With flutt'ring wing their genial heat restore ;  
 Some from the pendent cradle soar away,  
 Then sweep around their bed in wanton play,  
 And venture onward, to return no more.

IX.

Thus seem'd the squadrons, clad in robes of light,  
 When now, within the reach of mortal fight,  
 Hov'ring along the splendid scale, they came ;  
 The brightness in the van that glitter'd nigh  
 With such transcendent radiance dull'd my eye,  
 As show'd transcendent Love awoke the flame.

X.

But she, meanwhile, from whose celestial look  
 The sigh to ask, or to refrain, I took,  
 Yet veil'd her smiles, and pond'ring still I stood  
 What such a silence meant ; but she, who saw  
 In Heav'n's high Mirror what my rev'rend awe  
 Conceal'd, the signal gave in gentler mood.

XI.

Permitted now, my dazzled eyes I rais'd,  
And to the brightness which before me blaz'd  
I thus began : " Though nought of worth I plead  
To merit your regard, yet gently deign  
At HER request, that shows the heav'nly reign,  
To tell what triumphs of the blest you lead.

XII.

" And why, when other worlds resound afar  
With loud HOSANNAHS sent from Star to Star,  
With you the music of the Spheres is mute ?"  
" Your sense of hearing, feeble as your sight,  
Could not such impulse bear," the Son of Light  
Reply'd ; " this, mortal, solves the high dispute.

XIII.

" The lightning of her smile had sent your Soul  
Before its time to wander round the Pole ;  
The thunder of our Psalms would burst the bar  
That guards the portals of your trembling ear ;  
For your behoof, from a superior's Sphere  
Love brought us down to light a lower Star.

XIV.

" But that exalted Charity that glows  
Here over all, on each by lot bestows  
His mission by the sov'reign Will design'd,  
As here you see." With rapture in my eye,  
" LOVE," I return'd, " and more than LOVE I spy,  
Free, but obedient to th' Almighty Mind.

XV.

“ But this seems hard to solve, why thou alone  
Should be dispatch’d to this inferior zone ?”

I scarce had ended, when the living flame  
In spiry circles seem’d around to spin,  
As on a viewless centre turn’d within,  
And fill’d with sacred joy without a name.

XVI.

“ When thus the Voice with accents sweet rejoin’d  
In this resplendent vesture of the Mind,  
Eternal life pervading all my Soul,  
Such a new influx gave of Love and Light,  
That the first Being to my raptur’d sight  
His majesty display’d above the Pole.

XVII.

“ To HIM that spans infinitude alone  
The final causes of his acts are known;  
And tho’ the SERAPHIM with steadfast eyes  
Upon his glories gaze, yet still remain  
The wonders of his love, explor’d in vain  
By all the winged Sages of the Skies.

XVIII.

“ Deep lie his counsels in th’ abyfs of light,  
Beyond the prospect of created sight ;  
Your fellow mortals must by you be taught  
To curb their fancies, and improve their faith :  
Clear is our reason here, but dim beneath,  
Where endless vapour clouds the seat of thought.

XIX.

“ For even above it strains our mental view,  
The secrets of our Sov’reign to pursue;  
    Tho’ GOD exalts our faculties as far  
As wide creation’s bounds, yet still we find  
The strongest emanations of the Mind  
    Oppos’d by some insuperable bar.”

XX.

Thus on my curious thought he shut the door;  
I left the question as it stood before,  
    Content his station and his name to know.  
He answer’d, “ Thou hast seen the brow sublime  
Of Appenine, that past the LATIAN clime,  
    And hears the mutt’ring thunder roll below.

XXI.

“ A rugged Cliff the parent mountain rears;  
Beneath, an holy hermitage appears,  
    Where many a sage contemplatist was known  
In vigilance and pray’r to spend his days,  
Hymning the Sov’reign Cause with hallow’d praise:  
    Here long I liv’d, contented and alone.

*St. xxi. l. 6. Here long I liv’d,—*] The Speaker was PETER DAMIAN, first a celebrated Recluse in a Monastery near RAVENNA, but before his death prevailed upon to put on a Cardinal’s Cap.—VELLUTELLO.

In this Monastery DANTE, after his banishment, is said to have finished his Poem, of which only the first seventeen Cantos of the INFERNO were written before that event.—ANGELLUCCI.



XXII.

“ MINERVA’S tree supply’d my daily fare,  
When rugged Winter yok’d his frozen car,  
And gather’d herbs, while Summer smil’d serene ;  
Yet thro’ the fierce extreme of heat and cold  
Unmark’d, the mighty wheel of Nature roll’d,  
My Mind survey’d a more majestic scene.

XXIII.

“ Oft’ steering upwards to their happy lot,  
In many a freight from that sequester’d spot,  
Were seen, on Heav’n’s eternal voyage bound,  
Whole caravans of Souls : but now no more  
On wings of flame from that unhappy shore,  
Heav’n’s Candidates o’er-pas the heav’nly mound.

XXIV.

“ But JUSTICE soon, descending from the Skies,  
The spot profan’d by Sin will signalize,  
Long by the life of DAMIAN known to fame ;  
from the taint of early crimes releas’d,  
By pray’r my worldly habitudes repress’d,  
And temperance relum’d the sacred flame.

XXV.

“ A little space of life remain’d to run,  
When I again by worldly honours won,  
For priestly purple chang’d my hairy gown,  
And wore that turban, which to use profane  
Is often doom’d amid that haughty train,  
Spotless at first, but now of black renown.

XXVI.

“ The great BAR JONAS and th’ elect of GOD,  
 JUDEA’S rugged hills in sandals trod,  
     Content with simple fare wherever found;  
 Those holy GOURMANDS, insolent and proud,  
 In soft sedans supported thro’ the crowd,  
     Will scarcely deign to touch the humble ground.

XXVII.

“ Leaning upon their Satellites they go,  
 Propp’d up on either side, a goodly show :  
     With one behind, to bear the trailing vest ;  
 Their steeds, with costly cloths all cover’d o’er,  
 Proudly curvet on TYBER’S trembling shore,  
     And flowing mantles hide the DOUBLE BEAST.

XXVIII.

“ How long will this be borne ?” He scarce had spoke,  
 When round a thousand conflagrations broke,  
     And down the stairs a bright procession came,  
 And round in many a burning circle wheel’d,  
 While bright’ning all the wide SATURNIAN field,  
     Descending glories spread a lambent flame.

XXIX.

And still as o’er the Sky the Pageant flow’d,  
 Its radiant skirts with brighter colours glow’d,

*St. xxvi. l. 1. The great BAR JONAS—] A name given by our SAVIOUR to PETER.*

*St. xxvii. l. 6. — hide the DOUBLE BEAST.] The Horse and his Rider.*

Then o'er the region swell'd an hymn so clear  
And loud, it seem'd to rack my ravish'd brain;  
No mortal muse could emulate the strain,  
That palsy'd ev'ry nerve with tone severe.

END OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CANTO.



## CANTO THE TWENTY-SECOND.

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### ARGUMENT.

Conversation with the Spirit of Saint BENEDICT.—Ascent to the  
Starry Heavens.

---

THE concert clos'd; with pausing thought I ey'd,  
In mute astonishment, my heav'nly Guide,  
As to his Mother's eye the trembling Child  
With terror turns. But, with maternal glance,  
The holy Nymph reliev'd me from my trance,  
'Swaging my causeless fear with accents mild.

### II.

“ Do you not feel with what a sudden flight  
Your Soul has mounted to the realms of Light?  
No cause for terror in these bounds is known,  
Nothing but ardent love and holy zeal,  
The sacred Choirs communicate and feel,  
In the wide circuit of the stellar Zone.

III.

“ How would the song of blifs have shook your Soul,  
Or my full glories darting round the Pole,  
When even the faintest echo struck a pause  
Thro’ all your mental powers? You then had known,  
What vengeance kindles round th’ Eternal’s Throne;  
Soon will it vindicate her broken laws.”

IV.

“ Before your winged Soul shall difengage  
From its low trammels, on your earthly stage  
The thunder-bolt shall fall; but sooner far,  
Indignant Man the fiery lance had hurl’d,  
In hasty zeal, to scourge a sinful world, [spare.  
While guilt presumes that Heav’n the stroke may

V.

“ But now to other wonders turn your eye,  
Soon other glories of the op’ning Sky  
Shall meet your view, if you direct it right.”  
I look’d, and saw a thousand Orbs descend,  
And scintillating round, their radiance blend  
In one wide waving canopy of Light.

VI.

I stood, like him who checks his warm desire,  
When chilling Fear repels the rising fire,  
And on his trembling tongue the question dies;  
When from a burning globe, on wings of flame,  
A Spirit in my sphere of vision came,  
And thus began the Inmate of the Skies :

VII.

“ Had you but known the ardent flame of Love,  
 That lights those winged Bands of bliss above,  
 No dread had clos’d your lips. But no delay  
 From us (who know your longing) shall be giv’n  
 To solve your doubts;—your thoughts are seen in  
 Heav’n,  
 Clear as the scenes disclos’d by op’ning Day.

VIII.

“ Those southern Cliffs that o’er CASINO frown,  
 Are peopled by a Tribe of black renown;  
 Benighted Minds! eclips’d by demon guile.  
 I first divulg’d among the mole-ey’d Race  
 The name of JESUS, and the dawn of Grace,  
 Whose noontide glories now reward my toil.

IX.

“ Such clear reflexion from the Throne of Heav’n,  
 To guide my steps among those hills was giv’n,  
 Enlight’ning, like the Sun’s ascending ray,  
 All eyes and hearts in every hamlet round;  
 Where’er I pass’d, with rev’rend awe profound,  
 They fled from darkness, and ador’d the Day.

X.

“ These other living Stars that round me rise,  
 Began their rapt’rous commerce with the Skies,

*St. viii. l. 4. I first divulg’d—*] St. BENEDICT, who founded the  
 Monastery of CASINO, on a scite where formerly there had been a  
 Temple of APOLLO.—LANDINO.

While yet on Earth, and felt the sacred fire  
That feeds the germs of grace within the Soul,  
Impregns the mental soil from Pole to Pole,  
And bids the mounting thought to Heav'n aspire.

**XL.**

“MACARIO, here, and ROMOALD, grace my side,  
Whose Souls the halcyon calm of hope enjoy'd,  
And, midst the driving storms that rag'd below,  
Anchor'd on Heav'n.”—“Your love,” I straight re-  
“And each warm emanation of your Mind, [join'd,  
Their kindred ardour on my Soul bestow.

**XII.**

“My open'd heart the heav'nly beam inhales ;  
As blushing roses to the vernal gales  
Expose the glowing breast, and drink the Day  
Thro' ev'ry purple vein : 'tis thus I feel  
My Soul its unthought energies reveal,  
To meet your ardours more than half the way,

**XIII.**

“O then vouchsafe to fate my strong desire,  
And drop that dim eclipse, immortal Sire !  
That clouds your glories from my mortal fight !  
Let me enjoy your presence, face to face.”  
“Soon,” he reply'd, “but in a loftier space,  
My features shall be seen in open light.

*St. xi. l. 1. MACARIO, here, and ROMOALD,] Two ancient Men  
of holy lives, both Hermits.*



XIV.

“ There all desires their proper objects meet,  
There, all immoveable, and all complete,  
Each knows his place, and all their station keep  
Without the dread of change ; where time and place  
At once are lost, and Heav’n’s wide circling race  
Around the Poles is sunk in endless sleep.

XV.

“ To that proud summit yonder scale ascends,  
Far, far among the burning Stars it ends,  
To human sense immeasurably tall :  
This JACOB, in the deep, nocturnal noon,  
In radiant pomp, below the silver Moon,  
Descending, saw from Heav’n’s majestic hall.

XVI.

“ Then, down the vast declivity he spy’d  
Long files of Angels o’er the mighty void,  
In midnight march, an holy visit pay  
To ISRAEL’s happy Strand. But now no more  
Its footstool rests on that devoted shore ;  
The Sins of Man have clos’d the sacred way.

*St. xv. l. 4. This JACOB,—*] See his Vision, Gen. xxviii.

*St. xvi. Then, down the vast declivity, &c.]* MILTON seems to have imitated this, Par. Lost, b. iii. l. 516.

Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood

There always.—

Direct, against which open’d from beneath,

Just o’er the blissful seat of Paradise,

A passage down to Earth, a passage wide, &c.

XVII.

“ The feet are fetter’d in unholy slime  
That climb’d, with winged haste, the scale sublime ;  
My chart, that shew’d their voyage to the Stars,  
Lies a dead letter now : their hallow’d walls  
Are turn’d to robbers’ dens, to bestial stalls,  
And holy hoods are fill’d with Stygian tares.

XVIII.

“ But ufury shall sooner be forgiv’n,  
That deadly sin, that smells so rank to Heav’n,  
Than the foul deeds of the monastic fry,  
The heart’s corruption, and the hand’s offence.  
Hence ! ye polluted sins of BELIAL ! hence !  
Nor thus affront th’ inevitable eye !

XIX.

“ EMMANUEL’s word no MAGAZINE allows  
To fill the chambers of his sacred house ;  
It is the poor Man’s boon, he claims the whole !  
LEVITES ! your sacrilegious hands restrain,  
No Harlot here, nor Catamite profane,  
Must spoil the sacred ransom of the Soul.

XX.

“ ’Tis easy first to mould the flexible heart ;  
But soon rebellious to the plastic art,  
It loses the fine stamp, and turns away.  
You plant the acorn, but your labour spare,  
Protecting Mounds, and Sun, and genial Air,  
The plant requires, to bid its boughs display.

XXI.

“ With empty scrip the GALILEAN sped,  
And with unsparing hand, the hallow'd bread  
Of Life dispens'd at large o'er hill and dale;  
FRANCIS and I with pray'r and fasting strove,  
Thro' many a sleepless night, and morn of Love,  
To brace our Soldiers in their heav'nly mail.

XXII.

“ But mark the limpid current where it flows,  
And see how foul the muddy channel grows,  
When black pollutions, from a thousand hills,  
And sleeping STYGIAN pools, infest its wave.  
JORDAN! return to your paternal Cave;  
Your parent Cave with pois'nous dew diftills.

XXIII.

“ But he that smote the deep, and bade it roll  
In horror from its bed, can strike the Soul;  
I see the lifted rod.” He said, and fled  
Back to his radiant post: from rear to van  
The bending files in fiery circles ran,  
And with a whirlwind sound thro' Æther sped.

XXIV.

Then, with a sign, the bright ELYSIAN Fair  
Dismiss'd me after, thro' the depths of air,  
By that dread scale that lean'd upon the Sky;  
So much her native energy o'ercame  
My habitudes, that, like ascending flame,  
I climb'd, with vent'rous step and steadfast eye.

St. xxi. l. 1. —*the GALILEAN*] PETER, or any of the Apostles.

XXV.

Not with such speed, thro' parting clouds below,  
 Ascends the arrow from the twanging bow,  
 Or darts again to Earth on whistling wing,  
 As up the long range of the pendent stair,  
 Like running light, I pierc'd the yielding air,  
 Which seem'd around my dizzy head to ring.

XXVI.

In shorter space than I the flame could bear,  
 With voluntary haste along the sphere  
 I sped, till LEDA'S TWINS oppos'd my flight;  
 Else may I ne'er the holy triumph see,  
 Ne'er join the solemn song of Jubilee,  
 But mourn my Sins, as now, immers'd in Night.

XXVII.

" O glorious constellation ! heav'nly Source,  
 Pregnant with Light and Life, I felt your force  
 From world to world, across the annual Zone,  
 Streaming on me ; I quicken'd on your ray,  
 Which rose, ascendent with the Lamp of Day,  
 When PHOEBUS met you in his moving throne.

XXVIII.

" When from the shorten'd journey of the year  
 I rose aloft, to wing a wider sphere,

*St. xxvii. l. 1. O glorious Constellation, &c.] DANTE supposed himself born under the influence of the sign GEMINI, when the Sun was in that constellation ; but the day is not marked.*

And with the mighty mundane round to ride  
Among the Stars, a sympathy unknown,  
My upward flight to your resplendent throne,  
Thro' the fine element vouchsaf'd to guide.

XXIX.

“ Bright Flame! or rather thou whose breath divine  
Illumin'd Space, and gave yon' Stars to shine;  
O! with thy buoyant Spirit wing my Soul,  
To this tremendous Voyage spread before  
Her sail, thro' this dread space without a shore,  
Whose strong attraction lifts me to the Pole!”

XXX.

“ Your long excursion soon will have an end,  
Full on Salvation's verge you now ascend:  
Now for an Angel's beam your mortal flight  
Should be exchange'd; but turn around, and try  
How far your eye can travel down the Sky,  
To the pale regions of reflected light.

XXXI.

“ Let that proud Theatre your Mind expand,  
With transport like itself, excursive, grand,  
Before that glorious vestibule you tread;  
Left after such a flight, from Pole to Pole,  
Their thund'ring Jubilee should overwhelm your Soul,  
And send you, blasted down from whence you fled.”

XXXII.

She spoke: I look'd below, and instant spy'd  
The seven revolving Orbs in circuit wide,

Thro' the expanse of Æther marching slow,  
Round within round ; and this dim Planet soon  
I saw, emerging with her neighb'ring Moon,  
And smil'd contemptuous at the pigmy show.

XXXIII.

Foul nest of countless crimes, you merit well  
More holy anger, more indignant zeal,  
Than suits the Muse ; and he who scorns you more,  
Yet more of true Divinity can boast,  
Than he whose conquests stretch around thy coast,  
Yet ne'er is known an heav'n-ward flight to soar.

XXXIV.

PHOEBE the fair was seen without her veil,  
That oft appears her beauty to conceal,  
And stain the brightness of her silver Car ;  
And SOL his fiery diadem had lost ;  
Even MAIA's Son unseath'd, his chariot cros'd,  
And close behind pursu'd the CYPRIAN Star.

XXXV.

JOVE, I beheld between his frozen Sire  
And his proud Son, that flam'd with martial fire :

*St. xxxii. l. 4.* —*this dim Planet soon*] The Translator has taken the liberty of calling the EARTH in this place a Planet, according to modern ideas. It is Globe, in the original ; and, according to the Ptolemaic system, which then prevailed, was looked upon as the centre of the Universe, and consequently immoveable.

*St. xxxiv. l. 1.* PHOEBE *the fair*—] The Moon.

5. MAIA's Son] MERCURY.

6. CYPRIAN Star] VENUS.

*St. xxxv. l. 1.* —*frozen Sire*] SATURN.

2. —*his proud Son*] MARS.

There, 'mid the fierce extremes, his milder seat  
The Planet, like a lawful Monarch, took ;  
I saw how place and distance chang'd their look,  
As now they seem'd to part, and now to meet.

XXXVI.

Their wond'rous amplitude, their swift career  
I mark'd, high thron'd amid the stellar Sphere,  
And how they knew their bounds, and turn'd again,  
When their faint glories seem'd to die away,  
Coursing, with oblong sweep and kindling ray,  
O'er the broad bosom of th' ethereal plain.

XXXVII.

This Earth, suspended in the hollow Sky,  
That makes poor Mortals proud, unknowing why,  
From the celestial TWINS, where now I rode,  
I measur'd, hill and dale, and flood and field ;  
My eye the kindling signs of scorn reveal'd,  
And turn'd for refuge to the throne of God.

END OF THE TWENTY-SECOND CANTO.





CANTO THE TWENTY-THIRD.

---

ARGUMENT.

Our SAVIOUR appears in Triumph, surrounded by an innumerable  
Company of the Blest.

---

AS the fond Mother, nestling in the grove,  
Watches her slumb'ring family of Love,  
While fable Night invests the face of things,  
And hinders her excursions, to prepare  
The daily dole, that feeds her callow care,  
And spreads above them her maternal wings.

II.

As, anxious, waiting till the morning chill  
Scatters the hoary dew o'er dale and hill,  
Her eager eye anticipates the day :  
Like her, thus longing for the Sun's uprise,  
The Nymph was seen to point her kindling eyes  
Where PHOEBUS' fiery wheels at noon delay.

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III.

As thus in rapt expectancy she stood,  
 Her eager action fir'd my kindling blood,  
     Which caught her varying Passions as they rose :  
 Scarce 'twixt her Hope and mine a moment pass'd,  
 When other glories, dawning o'er the waste  
     Of ÆTHER, seem'd new wonders to disclose.

IV.

“ Behold !” transported, she exclaim'd, “ behold  
 The banners of Redemption there unfold,  
     And all the ransom'd Trains, from all the Spheres,  
 Attend their Saviour's jubilee above.”  
 She ceas'd, and look'd with such transcendent love,  
     That to display her charms the Muse forbears.

V.

And as pale CYNTHIA to the solar ray  
 Her moving mirror holds, and meets the day  
     With face direct, and o'er the tranquil scene  
 Delighted bends her eye, her Nymphs around  
 People with mingling beams the blue profound,  
     And view with sparkling eyes their smiling Queen.

VI.

Thus, 'midst a thousand thousand living stars,  
 Like Deities enthron'd in golden Cars,  
     Half lost in the full blaze that flush'd the Sky;  
 A glorious Sun his radiance threw around,  
 Like ours, when rising o'er the blue profound,  
     A radiant Form that mock'd the mortal eye.

VII.

“ What fights are here ; immortal Maid !” I cry’d,  
 “ I sink, I fall !” “ Be firm,” the Nymph reply’d ;  
 You see the virtue of th’ ETERNAL WORD,  
 That dooms the rebel, and the loyal saves ;  
 A stream of glory thro’ the yawning graves  
 From Heav’n he sent, and Hell his might deplor’d.”

VIII.

As light’ning, darting from the heav’nly coast,  
 Flashes expansive, till in Æther lost,  
 Or glances on the ground, and dies away ;  
 Thus, overcome by this celestial feast,  
 My vagrant Soul, as from myself releas’d,  
 From ev’ry recollection seem’d to stray.

IX.

Again was heard my Guide’s consoling voice :  
 “ Since those interior splendours of the Skies  
 You now have seen, you well can bear to view  
 Me as I am, and meet my heav’nly smile.”  
 Sudden I seem’d like one whose fruitless toil  
 Tries a forgotten vision to renew.

X.

Then, oh ! what welcome met my ravish’d ears !  
 Worthy that high degree above the Spheres !  
 That Tablet, which preserves th’ ideal train,  
 Fill banish’d by affection, pain, or time,  
 In ev’ry chance, or change, or place, or clime,  
 For evermore that Image shall retain.

XI.

But if an hundred tuneful tongues should try  
This topic new, and all the Muses vie  
    With all the jubilee of Heav'n in song ;  
Still vainly would they strive to match my theme,  
When, rapt to Heav'n in transport's sweet extreme,  
    On that transfigur'd Form entranc'd I hung.

XII.

Forbear, O Muse ! altho' you try'd to soar  
O'er all the wonders of the World before,  
    Here close your wing, and check your daring flight ;  
A chasm is here, which CLIO ne'er essay'd,  
A weight, by human balance yet unweigh'd,  
    No wonder if such themes my soul affright !

XIII.

No narrow frith is here for me to fail,  
With mariners unskill'd, in pinnace frail :  
    Weak pilot as I am, I dread to run  
On perils unperceiv'd, unfit to sway  
The guiding helm along an unknown way,  
    Content the danger of the deep to shun.

XIV.

“ Why do you dwell on those inferior charms,  
Tho' knidling in your Soul such soft alarms ?  
    That Light, which long you wish'd to view, survey ;  
Beneath whose smile ELYSIAN flow'rets spring,  
And all around immortal fragrance fling,  
    And with ambrosial fruits his beam repay.

XV.

“ Here SHARON’S rose dispenses soft perfume,  
The type of HIM who, by celestial doom,  
Departing from his glory, took beneath  
A vest of clay ; and here the lilies blow,  
That shed their sweetness o’er the world of woe,  
Attracting mortals up the heav’nly Path.”

XVI.

Thus spoke the Guide ; and I, obsequious still  
To every motion of the Vestal’s Will,  
Try’d for a passing glimpse, but half in vain :  
The Vision look’d, as when the solar ray,  
In scatter’d glances, sheds a dubious day  
Thro’ curtain’d clouds on FLORA’S fragrant reign.

XVII.

Thus, o’er my dazzled eyes, in transient gloom,  
Mortality’s deep shadows seem’d to roam ;  
Yet oft, a vista of transcendent light,  
In long array, the passing triumph show’d ;  
On their deep files a stream of glory flow’d  
From some ætherial source above my sight.

XVIII.

“ Prime fount of Love ! on me you deign’d to flow,  
Tho’ shrowded from my sight, and left below  
Prints of thy glory, which a mortal’s eye  
Could suffer unsubdu’d ! that stainless Flow’r,  
Whose name I sing at morn and ev’ning hour,  
Rais’d me to bear the triumphs of the Sky.

St. xviii. l. 4. —*that stainless Flow’r,*] The Poet means here the Virgin MARY.

XIX.

As much her heav'nly glance the charms excell'd  
Of those angelic bands that lin'd the field,  
As here below her beauty all surpass'd :  
But long I look'd not, when a lamp of Light  
Ran round her glorious head in circle bright,  
And on her charms a double glory cast.

XX.

Then they began an holy hymn to breathe :  
The sweetest concert in this vale of Death  
Seem'd harsh, as muttering thunder to the ear,  
With this celestial strain compar'd, that rung  
Around, while overhead the garland hung,  
Brought by the Seraph from the op'ning Sphere.

XXI.

And thus he sung, responsive to the chime  
Of golden lyres below : " From heights sublime  
Down hither on the wings of Love I sail,  
The heav'nly Maid commission'd to attend ;  
With her again to glory I ascend,  
And HIM whose prowess forc'd th' infernal jail.

XXII.

" When her bright charms the heav'nly courts adorn,  
She breaks upon them like a double morn,  
Th' eternal Temples more majestic shine."  
Thus sung the circling Seraphim, and all  
The HIERARCHIES, respondent to the call,  
Proclaim'd the MOTHER of the Birth Divine.

XXIII.

The glowing concave of that hallow'd dome  
Where all the circling worlds, that seem to roam  
In boundless mazes, find their fated place,  
For ever bright'ning in th' eternal beam,  
My straining eyes beheld in dubious gleam,  
Spanning all Nature in its wide embrace.

XXIV.

Too soon the long van, to that awful Sky  
Thro' the vast theatre ascending high,  
Was lost ; nor lost, with gemmy lustre crown'd,  
The fainted SPOUSE of JOSEPH thro' the gate  
Of Heav'n pursued her Son's ascending state,  
And glimm'ring vanish'd in the blue profound.

XXV.

Then, as an Infant for the lymph of life  
Extends its little hands in eager strife,  
And anxious longing for the tasted boon ;  
So those who stay'd behind, with eager eye  
Seem'd to pursue the triumph up the Sky,  
To the high summit of th' eternal Noon.

XXVI.

" Hail, Regent of the Stars !" I heard them sing ;  
Still in my ears their tuneful accents ring !  
O what an harvest of eternal joys  
Was theirs, whom heav'nly wisdom taught to know  
The season, in this mortal soil to throw  
The sacred seed that ripens in the Skies !

XXVII.

Here the deliver'd Saints enjoy the boon  
 Of life, and what they sow'd beneath the Moon  
     In tears, at BABYLON's unhallow'd stream,  
 Where long they mourn'd o'er SALEM's sacred spoils,  
 They reap above, the price of all their toils,  
     And sing with grateful voice the noble theme.

XXVIII.

There He, whose just hands hold the golden key  
 That opes the palace of Eternity,  
     Enjoys, with MOSES and EMMANUEL's Choir,  
 The vict'ries of the Faith; and those who, led  
 By holy PAUL and BOANERGES, bled,  
     Are amply paid by Heav'n's eternal Sire.

*St. xxviii. l. 1. There He,] St. PETER.*

*St. xxviii. l. 5. BOANERGES,] St. JOHN.*

END OF THE TWENTY-THIRD CANTO.



## CANTO THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

Conference of DANTE with the Spirit of Saint PETER, on the  
Nature of Faith.

---

“ O HEAV’N-SELECTED Band, for ever blest !  
Who sit incessant at th’ ambrosial feast,  
Giv’n by the LAMB, that fates your longing Souls  
With heav’nly cates, afford a Son of Clay,  
Yet ere he dies, his hunger to allay  
With blifs, that you can spare above the Poles.

### II.

“ Let your celestial bounty sympathize  
With his immortal thirst for endless joys,  
And from that heav’nly Spring one drop bestow,  
To quench his fervours.” Thus the Maid began ;  
Quick light’nings round the Pole responsive ran,  
And living Comets seem’d above to glow.

III.

As in a horologe the circles play,  
Some running speedy round, while some delay ;  
    So seem'd the glorious Orbs to mix above,  
In hasty measure, or majestic dance,  
Crossing the view, with quick alternate glance,  
    In all the forms of hallow'd awe and love.

IV.

Quick as the motion of careering flame,  
From the most splendid Orb a Spirit came,  
    Enkindling in his course divinely bright :  
Around the Virgin, in a radiant sphere,  
He flew so swiftly, and he sung so clear,  
    As dull'd at once my hearing and my sight.

V.

Created Fancy knows no tints so fine,  
To paint the wonders of this scene divine,  
    When to my Guide the Son of Glory said,  
Suspended in his speed : “ O, Sister ! say,  
Why from yon' Jubilee you drew away  
    My Soul ? Declare your will, celestial Maid ! ”

VI.

Then she : “ O fainted Soul, to whom was giv'n  
By our great Master's hand the Keys of Heav'n,

*St. iii. l. 1. As in a horologe, &c.] DANTE, by the luminous  
vests, the sprightly measures, and the harmony of the blessed Spirits,  
seems to express, allegorically, their intellectual and active powers,  
and the happiness which they enjoy.*

Brought from th' empyreal Sky for you to keep,  
Behold this Candidate, and prove his Faith ;  
See if it matches thine, when far beneath  
Thou met'st thy SAVIOUR on the troubled deep.

VII.

“ If Faith and Hope be his, and Love divine,  
Thou know'st, for that great privilege is thine,  
To view the Mirrors, where the deeds of Men,  
And ev'n their thoughts, in uncreated Light,  
In Heav'n's dread colours, meet the wond'ring fight,  
Reflected full to Saints' and Angels' ken.

VIII.

“ But, since the title to eternal joy  
Faith claims ; before yon' portals open fly,  
Give him the test, and try his grounds of trust.”  
I heard the charge, and summon'd all my might  
To hold high conference with the Son of Light,  
Invested as I was with humble dust.

IX.

As arm'd by Reason for the high dispute,  
The Pupil stands before his Master mute ;  
Thus, ranging all my thoughts in long array,  
In the retentive stores of Mem'ry laid,  
Light after Light I summon'd to my aid,  
Prompt to submit them to his sage survey.

X.

“ Pupil of JESUS,” thus the Saint began,  
“ Say, what is Faith ? Resolve me, Son of Man ?”

I turn'd me to my Guide the Sign to spy ;  
 The Sign was giv'n, and instant I reply'd :  
 " If Heav'n the Grace afford, illustrious Guide!  
 With your behest I'll instantly comply.

XI.

" His words can best my inward thoughts explain,  
 Whose toils with yours disturb'd the Demon's reign  
 On TYBER's shore : from him I learn'd of old,  
 Faith gives the proof that Hope aspires to find ;  
 Substantial proof, that fills the void of Mind,  
 And unseen things to mental light unfolds."

XII.

" You answer right," the heav'nly Vision said ;  
 " But tell me, why is this distinction made  
 Between the substance and the proofs when known?"  
 Then I : " The scenes that in full splendour glow  
 Before my sight, are hid to those below ;  
 Their substance there consists in Faith alone.

XIII.

" Thus Faith th' imputed name of substance claims,  
 On this celestial Hope her fabric frames,  
 And Reason, from the things above, begins  
 To weave her proofs (as if the mortal eye  
 Had seen the secrets of the op'ning Sky),  
 From the deep stamp of these celestial scenes."

XIV.

Soon he return'd : " If Faith allow'd no Guide  
 But Reason, and upon her aid rely'd,

No sophistry could shake Religion's base."  
Thus spoke the Saint, and, pausing, thus rejoin'd :  
" That notion of your Faith is well defin'd ;  
But does your heart its genuine pow'r confess ?"

XV.

" Yes," I reply'd ; " I own that genuine coin,  
Impress'd with the celestial stamp divine."  
" Whence was it gain'd ?" the Son of JONAS said ;  
" From Heav'n's abundant Grace diffus'd of old  
By those," I quick reply'd, " who left enroll'd  
What wonders Heav'n, to prove their cause, display'd:

XVI.

" On this my credence rests in full repose."  
" But how," he cry'd, " if misbelieving Foes  
Deny their truth, wilt thou their truth maintain ?"  
" Such wonders," I return'd, " as they record,  
Such proofs as Nature's course could ne'er afford,  
On adamantin base their truth sustain."

XVII.

" Now art thou sure," he said, " such works were done ?  
Now canst thou prove such wonders saw the Sun ?"

*St. xv. l. 3. —the Son of JONAS,] PETER—BARJONAS.*

*St. xvii. l. 1. How art thou sure, &c.]* This argument is expanded and enforced by Dr. PRIESTLEY, in his Letter to a philosophical Unbeliever. In fact, human nature must have been not only different from what it is now, but Man must have believed and acted on opposite principles to those which prevail at present, before we can believe that such precepts were received generally, without a supernatural interference ; precepts so contrary to the passions and prejudices which then prevailed.

“ If Man were gather’d to EMMANUEL’s fold  
Without a miracle,” I straight reply’d,  
“ Then MAN himself the miracle supply’d,  
Beyond all prodigies renown’d of old.”

XVIII.

“ THAT was a wonder, when the heav’nly seed,  
Sown by a lowly Swain, to want decreed,  
Grew a fair Vine, tho’ marr’d by many a Thorn.”  
This hearing, one by one the Ranks of Fire  
Sung one sole DEITY with voice and lyre,  
And distant Bands the tuneful tide return.

XIX.

Then the great Personage, at whose behest  
I thus from step to step my Faith confest  
To the last Stage that reach’d Conviction’s height,  
Reply’d : “ O Man ! the Grace divine that warms  
Your willing Soul with her immortal charms,  
Directs your answers with celestial Light.

XX.

“ Your Sage response my approbation gains :  
A more important question yet remains,  
The sum of your belief at large to shew,  
And whence the motive grew.” “ O rev’rend Sire,”  
I cry’d, “ you found the heav’nly view inspire,  
When you outstripp’d the youthful Train below.

XXI.

“ My Faith, whose cause you call me to recite,  
In one sole Being, Source of Life, and Light,

And Motion, tho' himself unmov'd I found.  
 Rather by sacred Love than Reason led,  
 And by that Grace besides abundant shed  
 On MOSES, DANIEL, and the Saints renown'd.

XXII.

“ To you, however, and your Brethren, more  
 I owe, when, on the same great cause, you bore  
 The sacred torch of Truth from clime to clime;  
 When that triumphant Spirit led the van,  
 Who breath'd submission thro' the Soul of Man,  
 And op'd benighted eyes to Truths sublime.

XXIII.

“ Three heav'nly Persons I believe combin'd  
 In one pure Essence, one eternal Mind,  
 Inseparate, uncaus'd, that ne'er will end:  
 This truth the Gospel, with a beam of light,  
 So clear displays before my mental sight,  
 That with unfading tints its colours blend.

XXIV.

“ This is the source from whence my Faith I claim,  
 This is the fuel of that heav'nly flame  
 That kindles upward as I mount the Sky,  
 As an ascending Star by motion fir'd.”  
 Like one who gladly hears what he desir'd,  
 The Vision bright'ned with increasing joy.

XXV.

And thrice around on fiery wing he sail'd,  
 And thrice with tuneful benediction hail'd,

And thrice the earnest of Salvation prais'd,  
By me so prompt in this confession giv'n :  
Then, sailing upwards to the vault of Heav'n,  
Amidst the radiant throng ascending blaz'd.

END OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH CANTO.



## CANTO THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

Conference with the Spirit of St. JAMES on the Nature of Virtue,  
by whom some Doubts of the Poet are solved.

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“ IF Fate would ere allow the lofty lay,  
Stol’n from the concerts of eternal Day,  
And sung beneath the Moon, the rage to quell,  
That chac’d me from my native field afar,  
Because I strove to quench the brand of war,  
To loftier notes the mortal strain would swell.

### II.

“ Tho’ now, deep plung’d in want and woe, I sing;  
With other notes, and to a louder string,  
Then had I learn’d to build the lofty rhyme;  
Then, where the pure baptismal fount I shar’d,  
I still would meet the Poet’s due reward,  
The laurel-wreath that scorns the spoil of Time.

*St. ii. l. 4. —where the pure baptismal fount I shar’d,] viz. at  
FLORENCE.*

III.

“ ’Twas there the rudiments of Faith I learn’d,  
Which, from the awful voice of CEPHAS, earn’d  
Such high applauses, when a wreath of fire,  
Th’ approving sign, he drew around my head :  
But now another luminary sped  
From the bright cohorts of the radiant Choir.

IV.

“ Behold the Preacher whom GALICIA heard,  
And in his voice the pow’r of God rever’d.”  
So spoke the Vestal, while the heav’nly Pair,  
Like two far-travell’d Doves, when first they meet,  
With plausive wing and gentle murmurs greet,  
Hov’ring, and cooing, in the fields of air.

V.

Thus these twin Stars, whose Evangelic glow  
From age to age illum’d the world below,  
Seem’d to my ravish’d view their light to blend,  
Praising the copious Source of endless joy,  
Distilling ever from th’ empyreal Sky,  
Whose stores Eternity can never spend.

VI.

But when the Saints, reflecting blaze on blaze,  
Divided on mid-air their mingled rays,  
Down each at once descends with pointed glance :  
Eclipsing mortal eyes, with radiant look  
The Virgin thus the foremost Saint bespoke,  
While, half absorpt, I stood in silent trance.

*St. iv. l. 1. —the Preacher,] St. JAMES.*

VII.

“ O sacred Sage! whose daring hand display’d  
The citadel of life in light array’d,  
And fledg’d our spirits with immortal plumes,  
To reach her height, with heav’nly food again  
Indulge our hope, tho’ near that blest domain  
Where she the garb of CERTAINTY assumes !

VIII.

“ Thy pencil trac’d her heav’nly Form with care  
In three bright Figures, each supremely fair,  
Matching the numbers of the chosen Choir  
Who on the lofty brow of TABOR stood,  
And JESUS in his robe of glory view’d,  
When Angels seem’d like mortals to admire.”

IX.

“ Look up,” exclaim’d the heav’n-illumin’d Sage,  
“ Created eyes, in this exalted stage  
Of light and life, must learn by just degrees  
That mixture of sensation to sustain,  
That dulls the eye, and whirls around the brain.”  
He spoke : I found my inward strength increase.

X.

—So mild a radiance from th’ Apostle stole,  
Its gentle emanation cheer’d my Soul,

*St. viii. l. 2. In three bright Figures —*] At the Transfiguration,  
when our Saviour was attended by PETER, JAMES, and JOHN.

The Apostle JAMES, in the 5th Chapter, gives a description of  
Hope under three examples, of an Husbandman, the Prophets, and  
Job, all emblems of patient Hope.—VELLUTELLO.

And instant on my vifual nerves beftow'd  
New tenfion, to fupport the wond'rous fight ;  
For there the holy Twelve, in purple light,  
To my rapt eyes their rev'rend features fhew'd.

XI.

Their Figures, indiftin& in heav'nly day,  
Till now I mark'd not, when the milder ray  
Of great IBERIA'S Sage my fenfes cheer'd:  
“ Since, by new miracles of mercy fhewn,”  
He faid, “ the wonders of the lofty zone  
By you are feen, be Heav'n's great name rever'd.

XII.

“ Attend ; that, taught by you, the TUSCAN Train  
To fcan the vifion of the heav'nly reign,  
By you difplay'd, may find their bofoms fir'd  
With genuine hope ; its nature firft difclofe,  
Then tell me whence this heav'nly bleffing flows,  
And how you feel your ravish'd heart inspir'd.”

XIII.

Thus fpoke the Sage ; and thus my faintly Guide,  
Who pinions to my heav'n-ward flight fupply'd:  
“ No Soldier 'mongft the Warriors of the Faith,  
With Hope fo ftrongly plum'd, affects the Skies ;  
As well you know, for your immortal eyes  
In Heav'n's clear Mirror fpy his future wreath.

*St. xiii. l. 1. —and thus my faintly Guide,]* BEATRICE.

XIV.

“ For this, kind Heav’n imparts the matchless boon,  
To visit those fair climes above the Moon,  
From central darkness, ere his mortal sense  
Be clos’d with dust, what you besides requir’d;  
Not for yourself, but others, you desir’d  
To give him means the blessing to dispense.

XV.

“ Homeward you bid him bear the rich perfume,  
Exhaling here from Hope’s ELYSIAN bloom,  
To warm the nations with attractive pow’rs :  
The rest I leave to him ; no hard employ,  
Nor dare he boast, tho’ favour’d by the Sky,  
If Heav’n on him unusual bounty show’rs.

XVI.

Then, like a Pupil in his Master’s lore  
Well skill’d, and furnish’d with abundant store  
From Saints and Sages old, I answer’d soon :  
“ HOPE is an ardent expectation giv’n  
By Grace, thro’ deeds of Love, to merit Heav’n ;  
Even on yon’ earthly stage a wond’rous boon.

XVII.

“ From many a Luminant of Heav’n combin’d,  
This holy radiance flash’d upon my Mind ;  
But chiefly he, who wav’d the flag of war  
With matchless hand before he struck the lyre,  
And sung of Heav’n with more than PINDAR’s fire,  
To my rapt Soul disclos’d the prospect fair.

XVIII.

*" They well may trust on thee, that knew thy Name,  
( 'Twas thus he sung with more than mortal flame, )  
And Faith like mine alone the knowledge gives :  
THOU, too, in apostolic toils employ'd,  
New light in this important theme supply'd,  
Which, giv'n by thee, thro' me the world derives."*

XIX.

While thus I spoke, the SAINT, with inborn joy,  
Shone forth like light'ning darting thro' the Sky,  
And thus reply'd : " The lamp of Love that burns  
Within, enkindled by the sov'reign Good,  
Whose light sustain'd me thro' the field of blood,  
To thee its heav'nly beam spontaneous turns.

XX.

" This prompts me to enquire, on what relies  
Your Hope : what promise to your Mind supplies  
Such confidence ?" " The heav'nly code," I cry'd,  
" Give me the shadow of this bright abode,  
Which now mine eyes behold, the seat of God ;  
Their inspiration serv'd me for a Guide.

XXI.

" ISAIAH first the veil remov'd of old,  
When the twin-blessings of th' Elect he told,  
The Body's glory and th' exalted Mind :  
Nor less thy Partner, when in lofty strain  
He sung the triumphs of the white stol'd train,  
To Æther call'd, from earthly dregs refin'd."

*St. xviii. l. 1. They well may trust, &c.] Psalm, ix.*

XXII.

Before he well had ceas'd, a song divine,  
 Rais'd in sweet chorus, seem'd his song to join :  
 On those delightful notes they seem'd to dwell,  
 Before each pause, "*On thee shall they rely :*"  
 While, round the circuit of the ample Sky,  
 Sweet Echo seem'd the genial song to swell.

XXIII.

Then, 'midst the Apostolic squadron bright,  
 Instant emerg'd another Son of Light :  
 If such a Star in CANCER's bounds should rise,  
 When wintry SOL to CAPRICORN retires ;  
 Its lustre would eclipse Hyperion's fires,  
 Till the receding CRAB resign'd the Skies.

XXIV.

As modest Bride-maids to the nuptial song  
 The new-made Spouse exulting lead along,  
 And to the music form the festive dance,  
 Not vainly bent their beauties to display,  
 But their due homage to their Friend to pay,  
 We saw the radiant Train in files advance.

XXV.

Scarce seem'd the glory from its place to move,  
 When those twin Stars of Charity and Love,  
 Each bright'ning each, receiv'd their hallow'd Guest :  
 In triple chorus soon we heard them join,  
 Chanting celestial HOPE with strains divine,  
 While ev'ry glance the Vestal's joy increas'd.

XXVI.

“ This is the chosen Saint,” at last he said,  
 “ Who his meek head upon the bosom laid  
     Of HIM, whose blood redeem’d the human race.”  
 Thus spoke the Maid, but turn’d her steadfast eye  
 Still on the moving Squadrons of the Sky,  
     With ear attentive, and insatiate gaze.

XXVII.

As he that gazes on the noontide Sun  
 In fancy views a dim eclipse begun,  
     When the dark shadow hovers o’er his sight,  
 O’er-whelm’d and master’d by the potent ray,  
 Thus still I view’d the Denizen of Day,  
     Till my eyes dark’ned with excess of light.

XXVIII.

Thus long I might have stood, with tranced look,  
 But these kind words at last my slumber broke :  
     “ Why weary thus your eyes to find above  
 That breathing dust, that far, oh far below !  
 ’Mongst others slumbers in the Vale of Woe,  
     One day to rise a family of Love ?

XXIX.

“ Two only, midst the retinue of Souls,  
 Bore to the Zenith their sublunar stoles,  
     And Æther pure with mortal organs drew.”  
 At her last words, in holy pause she stood ;  
 No more the heav’nly host their chant renew’d,  
     And silence reign’d around the welkin blue.



XXX.

As the tir'd Sailor rests upon his oar,  
When the shrill signal bids him toil no more,  
    So paus'd the Saint, while to the Maid I turn'd ;  
But, Heav'ns ! how was I struck with pale affright !  
My Guide (methought) had vanish'd from my sight,  
    And long, with streaming eyes, her loss I mourn'd !

END OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH CANTO.



CANTO THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

---

A R G U M E N T.

The Poet holds a Conference with the Spirit of St. JOHN, and afterwards with ADAM.

---

WHILE yet on blank variety I gaz'd,  
By the fair Vestal's sudden flight amaz'd,  
The radiant Being, whose o'er-whelming Light  
Eclips'd her Form in glory, thus began :  
" Ere your dim eyes recover, Son of Man,  
To Truth a while direct your mental fight.

II.

" Tell, on what objects are your thoughts employ'd ;  
Or is your intellect a formless void,  
Like that on which you bend your visual ray ?  
She, whom you follow thus, thro' realms above,  
Like ANANIAS, can the cloud remove,  
That hides the dawn of uncreated Day."

III.

“ Let Heav’n dispense the time and means,” I said,  
 “ To purge those dark’ned optics, which convey’d  
     Her Form at once, and Love’s immortal glow,  
 To my rapt Soul : upon the heav’nly source  
 And end of Love I fix my mental powers,  
     And my full homage on his Name bestow.”

IV.

The tuneful Voice that chac’d away my fears  
 Of blindness, like the music of the Spheres,  
     Again began, and fummon’d up my Soul,  
 With all her latent energies to meet  
 The high debate ; while thus, in accents sweet,  
     Continu’d the blest’d Tenant of the Pole.

V.

“ Your mental object, with more certain aim,  
 Your eye must mark.—Say, what awoke your flame,  
     And your affection, with a wing so true,  
 Sent like an arrow to a mark so high ?”  
 “ Fair ATHENS first illum’d my mental eye,  
     Then ZION’s hallow’d Hill enlarg’d my view.

VI.

“ Love, by its heav’nly object, warm’d, refin’d,  
 Acquir’d new vigour, as th’ expanding Mind  
     Seem’d to enlarge its comprehensive powers  
 To the dimensions of the heav’nly boon  
 Of all that glads the Soul, the central Sun,  
     The spring of blifs, and Love’s immortal source.

VII.

“ Love more intense depends on clearer views  
Of everlasting Truth, whose force renews,  
With fuel ever fresh, the dying flame :  
He first the interposing veil remov'd  
From the bright aspect of the FIRST BELOV'D,  
And gave me to partake the heav'nly claim.

VIII.

“ I felt th' enliv'ning fount, to AMRAM'S Son  
Sent from the centre of the burning Throne,  
*My Goodness all shall pass before your sight :*  
Next the grand view disclos'd to mortal eyes,  
By you, the pride and wonder of the Skies,  
Then, when immortal Life was brought to light.”

IX.

Mild he reply'd : “ Upon this double base,  
Enlight'ned Reason and enlight'ning Grace,  
Truth builds the fabric of your Faith above :  
But frankly own, if aught besides you find,  
In Earth or Heav'n, congenial to your Mind,  
That draws you with the violence of Love.”

X.

The master object of his eagle eye,  
That view'd so near the mystic world on high,  
To which he meant his Pupil's sight to lead,  
I knew, and thus began : “ The ties of Mind,  
That to creating Love its Vassals bind,  
I feel, nor would I, ev'n in thought, recede ;

*St. vii. l. 1. Love more intense—*] See Note on the thirteenth  
Canto, and Extract from PLATO'S SYMPOSIUM.

XI.

“ This wond’rous World’s existence, and my own,  
His Love, that left for me the heav’nly Throne  
Above, from second Death my Soul to save,  
By Faith a salutary Hope inspires,  
Which drew me from the gulph of low desires,  
And nobler objects to my Passions gave.

XII.

“ Where’er I see the heav’nly boon bestow’d,  
I hail the blessing as the gift of God ;  
Proportion’d to his gift, I feel the flame.”  
I scarce had ended, when the Squadron bright,  
In holy hymning, spoke their deep delight ;  
Heav’n’s golden vault return’d the loud acclaim.

XIII.

As when AURORA’s hand disrobes the Skies  
Of murky Night’s invidious dim disguise,  
Piercing the fine receptacles of light ;  
To the dark Sensory the heav’nly ray,  
With bright incursion, brings the golden day,  
Scarce able yet to bear the flood of light :

XIV.

Thus, when the Vestal turn’d, with heav’nly Grace,  
Those radiant eyes, that pierc’d the gulph of Space  
Millions of leagues, on me ; the transient gloom  
That hover’d o’er my eyes spontaneous fled,  
And gliding down beside the heav’nly Maid,  
Another Vision left th’ æthereal dome.

XV.

I wonder'd, and, my wonder instant ceas'd,  
 When thus my Guide, preventing my request :  
 " In his first Majesty you here behold,  
 In his æthereal vest, the SIRE of Man ;  
 His bright distinction, ere the world began,  
 Or EDEN yet had lost her Age of Gold."

XVI.

As stoops the tow'ring Beech before the blast,  
 Then gently rises when the gale is past,  
 And spreads its verdant screen with usual grace ;  
 So, wonder-struck, I for a moment stood,  
 Till Curiosity my pow'rs renew'd,  
 Thus to address the Founder of our Race.

XVII.

" O thou, who never with infantine eyes  
 Beheld the glories of the op'ning Skies,  
 And rose, in limb robust, mature in thought,  
 Father and Husband of the first-born Fair !  
 Unblam'd, your num'rous Sons and Daughters share  
 The joys of Love, and tie the happy knot.

XVIII.

" Hear, gen'ral Father, if you need to hear  
 Your Son's request, in this resplendent Sphere,  
 Where ev'ry thought, by intuition known,  
 From Heav'n's broad Mirror to each favour'd Mind  
 Its image sends, from vapours dim refin'd,  
 Still streaming from the supra-mundane Throne."

XIX.

As the mute animal its transport shows,  
 What warm sensation in its bosom glows,  
 And looks and gestures speak the raptur'd Soul ;  
 Thus EDEN'S HEIR, in ev'ry glance, exprefs'd  
 The sacred joy that glow'd within the breast  
 Of him, who first from HADES climb'd the Pole.

XX.

Thus he began : " I saw, without thy aid,  
 Thy wants, and ev'ry wish at large display'd,  
 (Like vapours that reflect a golden light,)  
 In that bright Mirror seen, a glorious show,  
 Which ev'ry thing above, around, below,  
 Reflects, above all mortal semblance bright.

XXI.

" You wish to count the journies of the Sun,  
 Since EDEN saw my vital course begun ;  
 That bower, from which, by yon' tremendous scale,  
 Hither conducted by the heav'nly Fair,  
 You mounted up from yon' terrestrial Star,  
 That glimmers in Creation's lowest vale.

XXII.

" You long to know what pleasures then were mine,  
 What language gave my thoughts the vocal sign,  
 And what employ'd my solitary hours ;  
 And how the bliss I lost, too pure to last.  
 'Twas no material fruit allur'd my taste,  
 But disobedience to the heav'nly Pow'rs.



XXIII.

“ Four thousand times the Sun in ARIES rode,  
And thence an hundred times the chill abode  
Of dim AQUARIUS blanch'd his languid fire,  
Ere, 'midst our lot obscure, the Virgin led  
The Soul of MARO from the mighty dead,  
And heav'nly Grace fulfill'd my long desire.

XXIV.

“ So long within the verge of ancient Night  
I stray'd, since first the bounds of cheerful light  
I left ; but ere I breath'd my Soul away,  
Nine hundred Summers cloth'd the waving woods,  
Nine hundred Winters froze the chrystal floods,  
And Spring with tempests dimm'd the cheerful day.

XXV.

“ The pure primeval tongue was wholly lost,  
Ere NIMROD had begun on TYGRIS' coast  
The fabric of confusion, task profane !  
Doom'd never to be clos'd ; for human will,  
Created free to chuse, and changing still,  
In no unalter'd tenour can remain.

XXVI.

“ Our thoughts fit sounds must find ; the changing mode,  
Man, by the freedom of his choice bestow'd  
By Heav'n, may alter words without a crime ;  
By one mysterious Name the LORD of ALL  
Was known, before I heard the awful call  
That led me downward to th' accursed clime.

XXVII.

“ To ELI then the Nations learn’d to pray:  
But human tongues, like falling leaves, decay,  
And, like the Summer liv’ry, spring again.  
In that blest’d mount my life in joy begun,  
And set in woe, before the circling Sun  
Had half-way measur’d down his blue domain.”

END OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH CANTO.

CANTO THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

---

A R G U M E N T.

The Spirit of St. PETER gives a Character of wicked Pastors.—  
The Ascent to the Ninth Sphere.

---

TO the great FATHER, the omnific WORD,  
And holy SPIRIT, rose in sweet accord  
Another peal of universal praise :  
O'er the wide concave of the peopled Sky,  
Dawn'd a soft and rosy smile of gen'ral joy,  
And signs of transport fill'd th' æthereal space.

II.

Loud Pæans, thund'ring down the heav'nly steep,  
Thro' my transported organs tingling deep,  
On the wide waves of Æther roll'd away :  
What a foretaste of joys above the Pole,  
When with expanded pow'rs my soaring Soul  
Seem'd Heav'n's eternal treasures to survey !

III.

Fir'd by the moving spectacle on high,  
The faintly Four beneath the kindling Sky  
New splendour caught from the surrounding scene :  
But mighty CEPHAS, with superior fire,  
Out-beam'd his brethren of the raptur'd Choir,  
And holy indignation mark'd his mien.

IV.

He seem'd as milder Jove's imperial Star  
Would look, if, in a stern eclipse of war,  
He caught from MARS his death-denouncing hue :  
A viewless Pow'r a sudden pause impos'd  
On the loud anthems of the heav'nly host,  
And o'er their joy a solemn dimness drew.

V.

Then from the Apostle, as I wond'ring stood,  
I heard these sudden sounds in angry mood :  
“ Wonder not thou to see the sacred glow  
Of rising zeal my alter'd features fire ;  
Soon as the cause is heard, the gen'ral Choir  
The same red sign of heav'nly wrath will shew.

VI.

“ That hallow'd Pile that crowns the COELIAN Hill,  
My throne, my sacred throne, tho' vacant still  
By Heav'n's award, a vile Ufurper claims :  
My sepulchre a sink of sin is made ;  
A way so grateful to the STYGIAN shade,  
That LUCIFER exults amid his flames.”

*St. iii. l. 4. But mighty CEPHAS,] St. PETER.*

VII.

Then, as the red flag of the rising day,  
Or the deep crimson of the setting ray,  
I saw Repentment flash along the field  
Of Heav'n ; as when a modest Virgin hears  
A tale of shame, it seems to taint her ears,  
Her purity is in her blush reveal'd.

VIII.

Thus, o'er the Sky a cope of dismal red,  
When JESUS breath'd his Soul away, was spread.  
Then he, that seem'd in zephyrean tune  
To speak before, inspir'd with sudden wrath,  
As if proud ÆOL lent his organs' breath,  
Loud like a full-mouth'd tempest thus begun :

IX.

“ The Spouse of CHRIST her garment never shew'd  
Sprinkled with mine, and many a Martyr's blood,  
To fill her lap with gold ; for *her* to gain  
That happiness you see. CALIXTUS dy'd  
For this, and SEXTUS swell'd the purple tide,  
URBAN and PIUS join'd the slaughter'd Train.

X.

“ Ne'er was it thought that, on the dexter hand  
Of that Ufurper's feat, a tainted Band  
Should sit, while, from the Tyrant's presence driv'n,  
Their Brethren of the Cross, on many a Shore,  
Their misery and exile should deplore,  
Oppress'd below, tho' Candidates of Heav'n.

*St. x. l. 1. —a tainted Band*] They, on the right hand, are the  
GUELFs ; those on the left, the Ghibellines.

XI.

“ I ne’er expected in that flag to see  
The sacred Symbol of the golden KEY  
Display’d in combat with the baptiz’d Train;  
Nor ever did I think my seal to know,  
Fix’d to the mandates of my deadly Foe,  
That oft my cheeks with honest blushes stain.

XII.

“ The prowling Wolf in ev’ry fold is seen,  
Dyeing with peaceful blood the conscious green;  
Why in the scabbard rests the angry sword,  
While GASCONS riot in the Martyr’s blood,  
And quaff without remorse the purple flood?  
What high commencements! what an end abhorr’d!

XIII.

“ But that eternal vigilance, that woke  
Young SCIPIO’s Soul to spurn the PUNIC yoke,  
Will nerve some patriotic hand to save  
From the dread fall of this impending weight  
The mighty Fabric of EMMANUEL’s State,  
And snatch his victims from the yawning grave.

XIV.

“ But thou, permitted with thy cumb’rous load  
Of earth to mingle with the Host of GOD,

*St. xi. l. 2. —the golden KEY]* Of St. PETER, displayed against the Imperial party by the GUELFs, or Pope’s adherents.

*St. xii. l. 4. While GASCONS riot—]* The partisans of CLEMENT the Fifth, a native of that country, who succeeded BONIFACE the Eighth.—See Hist. Flor. and Notes on the 27th Canto of the *INFERNO*.

Collect my words, and scatter them afar  
With dauntless zeal ; nor let the dastard fear  
Of Fiend, or Man, suppress the truth severe :  
Go ; in my name denounce eternal War !”

XV.

Soon, as around the snowy whirlwind flies,  
And fills with blinding gust the low’ring Skies,  
When SOL descending seeks the brumal goal ;  
So, thick the fiery cohorts upward flew,  
Like kindling vapours to th’ astonish’d view,  
Twinkling in myriads round the glowing Pole.

XVI.

My straining eyes pursu’d the fulgid cloud,  
Till, soaring far, the disembodied crowd  
Evanish’d from the sphere of human sight :  
Still, gazing up, I stood ; my heav’nly Guide  
Call’d my attention from the glimm’ring void,  
Red with the vestige of th’ ascending flight.

XVII.

“ Forget their progress, and attend your own ;  
See what a space of this Celestial zone

St. xiv.] MILTON seems to have had this notion of St. PETER’S  
in view in his LYCIDAS :

Last came, and last did go,  
The Pilot of the GALILÆAN lake.  
He shook his mitred locks, and thus bespoke :  
“ How well could I have spar’d for thee, young Swain,  
Enow of these,” &c.

You measur'd, since you left yon' Orb below."  
I look'd ; and, by the marks apparent there,  
I found my feet had trac'd the PRIMAL Sphere  
Up to the Zenith from th' horizon low.

XVIII.

This Earth, tho' worlds on worlds were rang'd between,  
Distinctly, with its seas and shores, was seen  
From GADES, where ULYSSES strove in vain  
To pass, to fair PHENICIA's distant strand,  
Where sad EUROPA left her native land  
Reluctant, wafted o'er the foaming Main.

XIX.

More had I seen, but now the courfers fleet  
Of SOL had left their post beneath my feet  
(Far, far below) a Sign's wide space or more :  
My Soul still burning for communion high  
With my bright Guide, I long'd to lift my eye  
To that blest face which still my thoughts adore.

XX.

Vain is the pencil'd Form, the living Grace,  
To match the glories of that heav'nly face ;  
No human tint, nor blended light and shade  
In all their combinations, could compare  
With one bright smile of that Celestial Fair,  
Which nameless transports to my Soul convey'd.

*St. xvii. l. 5. —PRIMAL Sphere]* Or *Ninth*, the *Primum Mobile*,  
which, according to the Ptolemaic System, dispensed motion to  
all the other Spheres which it enclosed.

*St. xvii. l. 6. Up to the Zenith—]* i. e. 90 degrees from the Ho-  
rizon.



XXI.

Not life alone, but energy was giv'n  
 By that quick glance, as up the steep of Heav'n  
 Along the PRIME revolving Sphere I pass'd ;  
 There, as aloft through concave Space I steer'd,  
 A dreadful uniformity appear'd,  
 Tho' spinning round me with tremendous haste.

XXII.

Here place and time to me alike were lost,  
 Unconscious where to take my fearful post,  
 Amid the dizzy whirl that turn'd my brain :  
 The Virgin seem'd my terrors to enjoy,  
 And smil'd as sweet, as if th' Eternal Eye  
 Itself had glanc'd along the blue domain.

XXIII.

“ Here is the place,” she cry'd, “ where first begins  
 The course of each revolving Orb that spins,  
 From the great Axle to the utmost bound,  
 With circling speed : no Heav'n remains behind  
 But the dread Presence of th' ALMIGHTY MIND,  
 Nature's prime Lord, that fills the vast profound.

XXIV.

“ LIGHT forms his Robe, and everlasting LOVE,  
 With boundless emanation from above,  
 His Palace frames, and gives the GODHEAD room,  
 Investing all things that his eyes survey,  
 In all the various hues of Night and Day,  
 And cov'ring all with one resplendent dome.

XXV.

“ But HE alone that spread Eternal Space  
Can tell the Miracles of time and place  
Contain'd within. Not setting Moon or Star  
Alone, but every revolution here  
Its measure finds in this stupendous Sphere,  
To Nature's wond'rous bound extending far.

XXVI.

“ Here ancient Time, within its causes deep,  
Seem'd in blank uniformity to sleep,  
Till sent from his dark jail to visit Earth,  
And bound his journies by the waning Moon,  
Till the last trumpet shall the Spheres untune,  
And drive him backwards to his place of birth.

XXVII.

“ His boasted regency you see below,  
O proud Ambition ! what an empty show ;  
What time can measure, and yon' bound contain !  
Yet, thro' the dark illusive medium view'd  
By Folly's eye, the dark CIRCÆAN brood  
Wear the soft splendour of th' Æthereal Train.

XXVIII.

“ Yet Man to Heav'n could mount on wings of fire,  
But the cross hurricanes of low desire  
Blow him transverse, and Demons mar the mould  
In which the heav'nly Virtues found their forms :  
Now Faith and Innocence, primeval charms,  
In infant minds alone their sweets unfold.

XXIX.

“ The lisping Infant now alone refrains  
From guilty joys indulg’d, and guilty gains ;  
And no more to the consecrated spring  
Does Contemplation lead the sober Train,  
Who by spare Fast their lawless Passions rein ;  
Even sacred walls with lawless Orgies ring.

XXX.

“ The tender Infant now alone reveres  
The Auth’refs of his life ; maturer years  
But give the wayward Passions room to play :  
Then, how he longs to look upon her Tomb !—  
Perhaps anticipates her ling’ring Doom,  
And hastens with a drug her fatal day !

XXXI.

“ As CYNTHIA shows at dawn a transient ray,  
But seems a dusky Orb when golden Day  
Streams from the East ; thus that Æthereal Light  
Which bounteous Heav’n bestows on nascent Man,  
Soon lost, alas ! in faded splendour wan,  
Th’ illustrious Infants leave a Son of Night.

XXXII.

“ But wonder not, for discipline is lost ;  
All Government by wild misrule is cross’d,

*St. xxxii. l. 1. But wonder not, &c.]* The Commentators say that DANTE alludes here to his expectations from the Emperor, HENRY the Seventh. It is probable that he might have in contemplation the judgments impending over the general corruptions of Church and State.

And none the rugged path of right pursue :  
But Justice soon shall scourge the lagging hours,  
Whose thund'ring wheels shall kindle in their course,  
And bring the doomful day that some shall rue.

XXXIII.

“ Then the contending vessel to the gale  
Seaward shall steer, and trim the flowing sail,  
And on her liquid track once more return ;  
A milder influence from the Stars will flow,  
And Autumn's hand the golden fruits bestow,  
Whose blossoms now perfume the Vernal morn.”

END OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH CANTO.

CANTO THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

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ARGUMENT.

The Poet ascends to the Empyreum, where he views the Wonders of the Angelic World.—The HIERARCHIES described.

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AS the sad prospect of sublunar strife  
With the clear Vision of eternal Life,  
The Guide, whose words emparadis'd my Mind,  
Compar'd; I saw, as in a Mirror bright,  
The quick reflex, as of a taper's light,  
On the clear optics, when it burns behind.

II.

And as the Gazer turns him round to view,  
Whether the lucid Orb has told him true;  
At the quick glances of the Vestal's eye,  
(These heav'n-attracting Orbs,) I turn'd me round,  
And soon the awful cause instinctive found,  
That spread another glory round the Sky.

III.

Yet had I not sustain'd the wond'rous view,  
But from these founts of Light and Love I drew  
New energies, whene'er I turn'd to gaze  
On each love-darting eye, with steady sight ;  
Since, now accustom'd to their cheering light,  
They ceas'd to strike my sense with dark amaze.

IV.

Far in the vast of Heav'n, a Light was seen,  
With such a pointed ray intensely keen,  
No mortal eye the splendour could sustain ;  
Tho' piercing thro' the brain it seem'd to glide,  
To it the smallest Star at ev'ning spy'd,  
Seem'd large as CYNTHIA in her blue domain.

V.

High as the cloudy wreath that binds the brow  
Of PHOEBUS, when his beams reflected glow,  
From the broad wat'ry umbrage floating round,  
A fiery whirlwind, thus, with ruddy blaze,  
Spun round the centre, in eternal race,  
Whole speed surpass'd the mighty Mundane round.

*St. iii. l. 1. Yet had I not sustain'd, &c.]* A figurative description of that Illumination and Energy conferred on the Mind by the study of Theology.

*St. iv. l. 1. —a Light was seen]* By the smallness of the Light the Poet means to signify the greatness of its distance ; if he does not allude to the quaint and obscure notions of some of the Schoolmen, who maintain, that the Omnipresence of the Deity is as a POINT, and his ETERNITY as an INSTANT.—See CLARKE's Sermons on the Omnipresence and Eternity of God. Post. Sermon. vol. i.

*St. v, vi, vii.]* These nine concentrated Circles are designed to represent the nine Hierarchies of Angels.

VI.

Nor singly did it run, but close beside,  
 Another flaming circle seem'd to ride  
     The racking clouds ; and soon a third began  
 To wake ; a fourth, and fifth, in bright career,  
 Swell'd the deep triumphs of the burning Sphere,  
     And round in wider revolutions ran.

VII.

In brighter tints the seventh was seen to glow,  
 And verge more ample than the show'ry bow  
     By JUNO painted, on the coming storm :  
 So seem'd the eighth, and now the ninth appear'd,  
 But round the centre more sedately steer'd,  
     And took more time their voyage to perform.

VIII.

Dim were their splendours, when with those compar'd  
 Who, circling round the central Glory, shar'd  
     The influence of its light, direct and clear.  
 The Maid, who saw me musing at the sight,  
 Began : " You see the FOUNT of LIFE and LIGHT,  
     Which Heav'n obeys, and each inferior Sphere.

IX.

" Yon' inmost Choir, that bask beneath the eye  
 Of HIM whose glance pervades Eternity,  
     Their deeper joy in livelier transports tell."  
 Then I : " Were all Creation's scenes dispos'd  
 Like these bright orders of the heav'nly Host,  
     The view some mental doubts would soon dispel.

X.

“ BELOW, the Spheres in ampler circuit spin,  
As more celestial energy within,  
Wing their bold voyage thro’ th’ æthereal way :  
In this wide Theatre, where all, august  
And dreadful, are combin’d, shall breathing duft,  
Unblam’d, his wand’ring fantasies display.

XI.

“ Why does the copy of the heav’nly Mind,  
With which this wide æthereal dome is lin’d,  
So diff’rent from its origin appear ?”  
“ No wonder,” soon the heav’nly Maid reply’d,  
“ Such knots by Mortals rarely are unt’y’d ;  
Deep thought alone can make the darkness clear.”

XII.

She paus’d a while, and thus renew’d her theme :  
“ Drink, if you can, of this celestial stream  
Of Light, which soon will clear your wond’ring eyes:  
With more activity yon’ circles move,  
Or less, as more or less of heav’nly Love  
His never-ceasing energy supplies.

*St. x. l. 1. BELOW, the Spheres, &c.] i. e. In the material world, the Circles nearer the Centre move slower, and those more distant comparatively swifter ; it is here the reverse. DANTE’S ideas are to be understood by a reference to the Ptolemaic system, where the PRIMUM MOBILE, or ninth Sphere, was supposed, as it contained the other eight, so to exceed them all in velocity.*



XIII.

“ Celestial Love to higher joys invites ;  
 If on a perfect object it alights,  
     Its amplitude to more abundant grace  
 Gives more abundant room : yon’ ampler bound,  
 That whirls the widely scatter’d Orbs around,  
     Runs with th’ interior Choir an equal pace.

XIV.

“ If to its inborn virtue you apply  
 The juster measure of your mental eye,  
     And not to forms alone, ye soon shall find  
 That pow’rs scarce visible to human sight  
 Exert thro’ Space incalculable might,  
     While giant forms with feebler pow’rs are join’d.”

XV.

As when with gentler breath th’ Elysian gale  
 Sweeps the gross vapour from the blooming vale,  
     The hills shine out, and Æther smiles serene ;  
 The Truth, thus beaming, like a rising Star,  
 Shone on my Soul, by that celestial Fair  
     Led on, and clearly shew’d the mystic scene.

XVI.

She spoke : at once, the high-suspended Choirs,  
 Bright’ning like melted ore, in circling fires,  
     With heav’nly glee, thro’ all the sparkling maze,  
 By twinkling legions ran, in number more  
 Than human calculations could explore,  
     Orb within Orb, reflecting blaze on blaze.

XVII.

To Heav'n's essential glory chim'd so loud  
 The sweet HOSANNAH from the living Cloud,  
 In transport's 'whelming tide it plung'd my Soul.  
 Thus sung the HIERARCHIES ; and still they sing,  
 And thus for ever spread the flaming wing,  
 Incessant circling round the steadfast Pole.

XVIII.

Instant the dubious movements of my Mind  
 The Nymph perceiv'd, and thus, in accents kind,  
 Began my ambiguities to clear :  
 " These fiery Globes, of SERAPHIM compos'd  
 And CHERUBS, swiftest of the heav'nly Host,  
 Wheel round the central beam in close career.

XIX.

" Behold what energy of Mind they show!  
 How Love, attractive, from the world below  
 Their Squadrons to the Throne converging draws!  
 Strongly the beatific Light inspires  
 To climb, but veneration damps their fires ;  
 Yet in the high design they never pause.

XX.

" That other Circle, whose exterior bound  
 Yon' bright Contemplatists of Heav'n surround,  
 Are THRONES, the utmost of the TRINAL Choir  
 That hem the Seat of GOD : the more they know,  
 With deeper joy they feel their spirits glow,  
 Quaff'd at that spring that satiates all desire.

XXI.

“ The springs of Bliss, from Contemplation’s flow  
 Abstracted, holy, while Affection’s glow  
 The Soul regales with secondary joy :  
 The VIRTUES here enhance the gifts of Sight,  
 While, deeper plung’d in Visions of delight,  
 In ev’ry glance it finds a fresh supply.

XXII.

“ That Train behold, in many a gorgeous robe,  
 That circles next around the fiery globe,  
 Like Heav’n’s primæval spring, conspicuous far :  
 Primæval Season ! never to decay !  
 Its bloom shall flourish in eternal Day,  
 Nor dread sidereal blast, nor windy war.

XXIII.

“ Have you not heard the Larks in early spring,  
 How to the Sky by turns they mount and sing ?  
 Hark ! how the lively descant rolls around  
 From tuneful Choir to Choir in triple chime ;  
 Now near at hand they lift the note sublime,  
 Then distant echoes catch the dying sound.

XXIV.

“ This HIERARCHY within its verge contains  
 Pow’rs, DOMINATIONS, in distinguish’d trains  
 With VIRTUES mingled ; in the rest behind,  
 Imperial PRINCEDOMS with ARCHANGELS meet ;  
 The Choir most distant from the burning Seat  
 Are ANGELS, lowest of the heav’nly kind.

XXV.

“ These upward all direct their ardent eyes,  
And, soaring, beckon to the op’ning Skies,  
Th’ inferior Tribes that wing another clime;  
Attracting and attracted, all combine,  
And mount aloft in many a burning line,  
Still verging to the lofty Seat sublime.

XXVI.

“ The sage ATHENIAN felt a strong desire  
Each rank to know that rise on wings of fire,  
And learn their Leaders and their sev’ral names,  
As I have told ; but GREG’RY, led astray  
By vagrant fancy from the heav’nly way,  
Rank’d all amiss these ever-living Flames.

XXVII.

“ Thence, when his Spirit, of its clay despoil’d,  
First saw this scene, the heav’nly Stranger smil’d  
At his first error : nor do thou admire  
That Mortals these immortal scenes defin’d ;  
PAUL to his Pupil’s hand the key consign’d,  
That op’d the secrets of the heav’nly Choir.”

*St. xxvi. l. 1. The sage ATHENIAN—*] DIONYSIUS the Areopagite, the Convert of St. PAUL, supposed to have written a book (still extant) on the heavenly Hierarchies. His account, it seems, differed from that of GREGORY, surnamed the Great.

END OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CANTO.

## CANTO THE TWENTY-NINTH.

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### ARGUMENT.

BEATRICE observes, in contemplating the divine Mind in beatific Vision, the Doubts arising in the Mind of DANTE, and their Solutions; then she inveighs against Clerical Corruption.

---

AS long as in calm Ev'ning's purple Zone,  
 With mild and mutual smile, the Sun and Moon  
 Rest in the heav'nly scale, and fleecy Star,  
 Till by that hand which from the zenith guides  
 The balance, one ascends, and one subsides;  
 So long, contemplant, stood the heav'nly Fair.

### II.

Bending on that bright throne her ardent eye,  
 She stood, an Image of empyreal joy,  
 Then thus began: "Your doubts I can explain,  
 Ere vested yet in words, by yonder ray,  
 Where, in the central beam of endless Day,  
 All Images ascend, a countless Train.

III.

“ NOT for himself he gave his glories room  
Thro’ boundless Space, ere, by th’ eternal doom,  
Time issu’d forth on wing to run his round  
With yon’ resplendent Orbs, but to dispense  
Ethereal blessing to created Sense;  
Hence those wing’d Messengers their being found.

IV.

“ Nor did th’ eternal SIRE above the deep  
Ere Time began in soft ELYSIAN sleep,  
Inactive rest, tho’ not by circling hours  
His deeds were measur’d, when, as swift as Light,  
FORM, and her Colleague, MATTER, rose to light,  
And join’d with MOTION their congen’rate pow’rs.

V.

“ Not from the chrystal Orb the shafts of Morn  
To the rapt eye with nimbler glance return,  
Than these ethereal Beings sprung to light :  
At first a vast, but undistinguish’d Host ;  
But soon th’ Almighty energy dispos’d,  
Each in their Hierarchies, the Orders bright.

VI.

“ Pure intellect the highest rank retains ;  
Thence various Pow’rs conspire in countless Trains,  
In ev’ry combination, each degree ;  
Where Matter weds with Mind, thro’ boundless Space  
At large diffus’d, till in the lowest place  
Dies the rude mass, devoid of energy.

VII.

“ Yet ev’n this mass, by heav’nly skill refin’d,  
Built yon’ proud Temples for the Tribes of Mind,  
And all around these heav’n-defying Tow’rs  
Rais’d for the Gods, indissolubly strong ;  
Whence those wide Vaults with Hallelujahs rung  
Long ere old Time awoke the flying hours.

VIII.

“ JEROM, the Sage, suppos’d th’ angelic Choir  
Stretch’d o’er the mighty void their wings of fire,  
Long, long before the figur’d world arose  
Magnificent ; but Reason, join’d with Light  
Reveal’d, against the holy Father fight,  
And on th’ attentive Mind their laws impose.

IX.

“ Why to the first created Heirs of Heav’n  
Should these gigantic energies be giv’n,  
Without some task their Virtues to employ ?  
Why should these fiery Sons of Æther fail,  
Still idle, over Desolation’s Vale,  
Like flaming Meteors thro’ a desert Sky ?

X.

“ Now you discern, as far as Man can know,  
Why Angels were created, when, and how ;  
Unmeasur’d was the Space, nor is it mine  
To span their sinless state, before the Fall  
Flung the first Rebel from th’ æthereal Hall,  
Thro’ crashing worlds pursu’d by Rage divine.

XI.

“ Yet numbers stood, and, when celestial art,  
Impell’d by Love divine, began to part  
The kindling seeds of elemental strife,  
Then, with the eye of wonder, saw advance  
To their soft song yon’ planetary dance,  
And all the miracles of Light and Life.

XII.

“ PRIDE was the cause of that Apostate’s doom,  
Whom late you saw, deep-whelm’d in central gloom;  
But these, that circle round in radiant Choir,  
To their humility their splendours owe,  
Because they always felt the sacred glow  
Of gratitude, their swelling strains inspire.

XIII.

“ Heav’n’s favour they befought, nor fought in vain;  
Its mental beams inform’d the holy Train,  
And fix’d their sliding will on firmest base:  
This is their sole desert, to give the ray  
Of heav’nly Light an unresisted way,  
And unreluctant meet the boon of Grace.

XIV.

“ From the first Leader of th’ angelic Van,  
Down to the lowest rank of ransom’d Man,  
The contrite Soul alone can claim a part  
In heav’nly bliss. And now you may pursue  
Your way with ease, if, like æthereal dew, [heart.  
My words have clear’d your sense, and warm’d your

*St. xiii. l. 1. Heav’n’s favour they befought,] A sentiment worthy  
of BEATRICE, as it is a precept of the soundest Theology.*



XV.

“ Against an human error he must guard,  
Taught by your Schools, and many an earthly Bard,  
Of those who, by equivocation led,  
Confusion worse than BABEL spread around,  
And with angelic faculties confound  
Your Tribes below, on cates material fed.

XVI.

“ Perception, Will, and Mem’ry, they bestow,  
Like these which fightless Mortals boast below,  
And Fancy forms them with a dark allay,  
That flatters Men in Sin : But Son of Night  
Knows no dark medium checks their mental fight,  
Nor needs their Mem’ry trace its darksome way.

XVII.

“ For ever on that BEATIFIC VIEW  
They look, and dwell with transport ever new  
On that bright prospect, where, in Day reveal’d,  
The PRESENT, PAST, and FUTURE, all are giv’n  
To light, reflected on the eye of Heav’n,  
Quick glancing o’er the wide æthereal field.

XVIII.

“ But, worldly Sages oft with you behold  
This blessed beam by error’s mists controll’d,  
Or with fictitious light the world deceive,  
A crime more heinous still ; in error’s maze,  
The self-taught Sophists lead a thousand ways,  
Proud of the sect that listen and believe.

XIX.

“ But not such flames of anger burn above  
For this, as when the testament of love,  
Interpreter of Heav’n, is taught to plead  
The impious cause of the TARTAREAN thrones,  
Like a sweet organ with perverted tones,  
Which us’d the Pæans of the Blest to lead.

XX.

“ Ah ! little do they think, what blood it cost,  
What toils, what conflicts, to the martyr’d host,  
To spread the heav’nly boon from shore to shore !  
But all, on Pharisaic forms intent,  
Reject the Gospel, for salvation meant,  
And stun the nations with their empty lore.

XXI.

“ One thinks, the soft-ey’d Sister of the Day  
Cross’d with her shadowy car the solar ray,  
Led from her adverse post, when on the SUN  
Of RIGHTEOUSNESS, eclips’d, she look’d aghast ;  
Another says, no gloom the day o’ercast,  
But light spontaneous left the eye of Noon.

XXII.

“ As common as the most Plebeian names,  
They mount the Rostrum, and display their *shames* :  
The hungry Sheep look up, and nothing fed,  
Pine in the fold, from the rank mist they draw,  
Or, swoln with wind, by Nature’s standing law  
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread.

XXIII.

“ Nor did the mighty NAZARENE command  
 CEPHAS with moon-bred themes to fill the land,  
 And maze the fancies of the human race ;  
 But gave a doctrine which supports its weight,  
 From Heav’n descending down, and fix’d as Fate  
 On everlasting Reason’s steadfast base.

XXIV.

“ This unsophisticated word alone  
 The first Disciples spread from zone to zone ;  
 And, in celestial panoply, defy’d  
 The banded foes of Man, wherever found :  
 But now, their vile successors deal around  
 Contagious pestilence from side to side.

XXV.

“ Proud of the faintly cowl, with haughty mien  
 They frown ; but if the STYGIAN Guide within  
 Would show his visage to the wond’ring crowd,  
 Soon would they find how Souls are bought and sold,  
 Where barter’d pardons are exchange’d for gold,  
 And crimes, like locusts, spread a living cloud.

XXVI.

“ The crowd, by airy promises beguil’d,  
 Run to the snare, with expectation wild ;  
 But on no fairy cates their pastors feed :  
 Batt’ning with indolence and ease they shine,  
 And pay their banquet in adult’rate coin,  
 Inferior to the herd of CIRCE’s breed !

XXVII.

“ Now turn we to the last celestial theme,  
And as we can the wasted time redeem ;  
    So wide th’ angelic Host extend their lines,  
The Heav’n of Heav’ns can scarce their Host contain,  
Nor human calculation match the train,  
    Tho’ DANIEL in his dream their sum assigns.

XXVIII.

“ But these determin’d numbers stand for more  
Than ever human Reason could explore ;  
    But that prime Source of Light with vary’d beam  
Sheds on each rank a correspondent ray,  
In ev’ry bright variety of day,  
    Where’er his blessings flow in boundless stream.

XXIX.

“ As these congenial blessings ebb or flow,  
The bounty of the Godhead wakes below  
    In ev’ry soul that lives, a various flame :  
These countless Mirrors, like the dews of morn,  
Thro’ Space the uncreated beams return  
    Radiant or dim, but His remain the same.”

END OF THE TWENTY-NINTH CANTO,

## CANTO THE THITRIETH.

---

### ARGUMENT.

The Poet arrives at the empyreal Heaven, where he sees the Triumph of Angels and beatified Spirits, in a sort of miraculous Medium, represented under the Image of a clear River.

---

AS when to TUSCAN eyes the level shade  
 Full westward points its cloudy cone, display'd  
 Over the bosom of unbounded Space,  
 Then, distant full two thousand leagues, the Sun  
 On eastern GANGES pours the flood of Noon,  
 While on our Ocean's brim his car delays :

### II.

Or, as in Heav'n's æthereal dome around,  
 The Stars, as in a purple deluge, drown'd,  
 With glimm'ring lamplets one by one decay,  
 Save one that sparkles thro' the parting gloom,  
 While sweet AURORA comes in rosy bloom  
 Before the bright-hair'd Messenger of Day.

III.

Thus the careering Squadrons of the Sky,  
 Disporting wide beneath th' eternal Eye  
     In all the varying tints of light and shade,  
 At first disclos'd an huge and countless Host,  
 In varying Orbs, enclosing and enclos'd ;  
     And thus its transient glories seem to fade.

IV.

Like a light vapour in the passing wind,  
 It mov'd away, nor left a wreck behind :  
     Full on the Maid my disappointed eye  
 Fell hopeless, tho' by old Attraction led,  
 Where, oh ! what nameless glories shone instead !  
     My Fancy soon forgot the changing Sky.

V.

If all the fervours of my former lays  
 Were cent'red in one single note of praise,  
     Far, far beneath her more than mortal charms  
 The mortal song would sink ; they blaz'd so bright,  
 None but the Source himself of Life and Light  
     Can duly estimate such radiant Forms.

VI.

Never did they, who sock or buskin wear,  
 With equal dread begin their first career,  
     Or feel such overwhelming weight as I,  
 Oppress'd by such a soul-subduing theme ;  
 Not such, an impulse from the solar Beam  
     Dulls the weak fight beneath a Summer Sky.

VII.

Thro' all the Stages of our march divine,  
 Since her celestial eyes first beam'd on mine,  
 To her full glories in the world above,  
 I try'd to sing her charms ; but now must cease :  
 The Artist's pencil now must rest in peace,  
 Hopeless the labour'd Model to improve.

VIII.

Some nobler Notes the lovely Maid must sound  
 Than mine, which now upon the utmost bound  
 Prepare to swell the consummating strain ;  
 As when a Chieftain gives the warning sign  
 To march, once more began the Maid divine :  
 " Leave the ninth Sphere, and seek th' empyreal reign.

IX.

" Here all the mental energies unite  
 With Love divine, and mix, like heat and light ;  
 The Hermit, searching long in vain below,  
 Here finds the Fount of everlasting Joy,  
 Here drinks oblivion of his long annoy,  
 And ev'ry shadow of sublunary woe.

X.

" Here, with his elder Brethren of the Sky,  
 The ransom'd Train shall pass before your eye,  
 And in a double Line their Chief pursue,  
 With equal pace, as when, in time to come,  
 In dawning Glory from the Field of Doom,  
 Transfigur'd, they shall mount in vesture new."

XL

As when a vivid flash of sudden light  
In midnight gloom involves the trembling light,  
Thus, a deep wave of circumfulgent Day  
Came o'er me as I stood, and to my view  
A deep'ning veil of sudden darkness drew  
O'er all the wonders of the wide Survey.

XII.

*" Such is the charm that boundless Love employs,  
To fit the Soul to feel eternal Joys."*  
As torches seem the hov'ring flame to seize,  
So, at these magic words, a catching fire  
Upbore me on the wings of warm desire  
Far in the climes of everlasting Peace.

XIII.

No longer now the glories of the scene  
'Whelm'd with o'er-pow'ring beams the light within;  
The light within, to Angel ken refin'd,  
Stray'd o'er the wond'rous Region far and wide,  
Where now a stream of light was seen to glide,  
And round the plains with funny surface wind.

XIV.

Between two Banks that bloom'd eternal May  
The waves of limpid Glory seem'd to stray;  
And kindling Forms, meteorous, were seen  
To rise, quick glancing in the noontide beam,  
From the bright bosom of the lucid stream,  
And hover o'er the flow'r-enamell'd green.



XV.

Thus round the shores a while they seem'd to fly,  
Then, as inebriate with celestial joy,  
Thick plung'd, like setting Stars, amid the flood;  
While others, from the Lymph, like dawning light,  
Alternate on the Zephyrs wing'd their flight,  
And ev'ry hour the lively change renew'd.

XVI.

“ Your wish, the wonders of yon' deep to found,  
More pleases, as it seems beyond the bound  
To swell ; but yonder Lymph you first must share,  
(To gross material Minds a bev'rage new,)  
Before you can support the splendid view  
Meant to illustrate yonder Vision fair.”

XVII.

Thus spoke the Maid, and pausing, thus again  
Began : “ That flood, and yonder festive Train  
That wanton in the wave, yon' borders gay,  
O'er which the Wand'ers seem, in quest of joy,  
To roam around beneath a purple Sky,  
Scenes still more wond'rous far in Types convey.

XVIII.

“ Not that the things which yonder signs conceal  
Are in themselves too awful to reveal ;  
But your infantine pow'rs, as yet confin'd  
By clay, are far too scanty to contain  
Such Images, as soon would turn the brain,  
And loosen all the texture of the Mind.”

XIX.

Ne'er did the Infant, starting from its rest,  
 Turn with such longing to its Nurse's breast,  
 As I, and downward stoop'd mine eyes to lave;  
 Scarce had I bent me o'er the brimming verge,  
 Scarce had I time my optics to immerge,  
 Ere the deep current spread a wider wave.

XX.

Now for a winding stream, a lucid lake,  
 Which no presumptuous Zephyr dar'd to wake,  
 Seem'd to the wide retiring shores to spread;  
 At once, the Meteor forms and breathing flow'rs  
 Vanish'd, with all the fair ELYSIAN bow'rs,  
 And a majestic Vision rose instead.

XXI.

Soon the twin Squadrons of th' empyreal world  
 Were seen, with all their banners broad uncurl'd,  
 Doubling the glories of the wond'rous fight:  
 O uncreated Beam! dispense a ray  
 From Heav'n, those lofty pageants to display,  
 And all the miracles of Life and Light.

XXII.

The SUN of Righteousness was seen above,  
 Dispensing mingled beams of Light and Love:  
 They look aloft, and drink the golden stream  
 Of sacred Peace and inexpressive Joy,  
 Unknown to all that view a nether Sky,  
 And ne'er behold the BEATIFIC BEAM!

XXIII.

The burning Circle seem'd to spread afar,  
 Beyond the disk of yon' diurnal Star,  
     A broad circumference, thick darting round  
 Its influence o'er the wide revolving Sphere,  
 Whose motion guides the great celestial Year,  
     Thro' the unmeasur'd realms of Space profound.

XXIV.

Each Creature thence, thro' all their countless Tribes,  
 Some deep peculiar energy imbibes,  
     From that prime Light dispens'd, that looks below,  
 Where many a Mirror shows its heav'nly charms  
 In bright variety, in countless charms,  
     And all the colours of the show'ry bow.

XXV.

A Mountain thus surveys its pendant height  
 In the unruffled flood, reflecting bright  
     Its lawns, and forests tremulous and tall :  
 When such contracted bounds such Light contain,  
 What floods of Glory vest th' æthereal plain,  
     A boundless blaze, diverging over all !

XXVI.

Yet my corporeal organs rapt above  
 All human energy, by heav'nly Love,  
     Like SOL's bright glance in his meridian height,  
 The whole æthereal prospect could command,  
 From wing to wing of that empyreal Band,  
     Like the wide sphere of Archangelic Sight.

XXVII.

Thro' the dread walks of this eternal Bow'r,  
Where many a fragrant and unfading flow'r  
More than ARABIAN incense breath'd around,  
O'er many a scene unlight'ned by the Sun,  
In wonder mute I stray'd; yet oft begun  
To speak, then paus'd, in speechless transport drown'd.

XXVIII.

“ Look what a dazzling Multitude is here,  
See our superb Metropolis appear  
In wide extended pomp; the countless Host,  
In candid stoles, that line her street, you see  
Yonder enshrin'd, its glorious Family  
Wait for th' Elect to fill each vacant post.

XXIX.

“ To that high Throne on which you fix your eye,  
A Soul shall mount from yon' inferior Sky,  
And leave Imperial HENRY's dust below;  
Before he fought the Feast of Bliss to share,  
He strove to quench the flame of civil war,  
But still the brand of EREBUS shall glow.

XXX.

“ O LATIUM, like a froward Child you stood,  
And madly flung away the proffer'd good,  
Altho' by famine pin'd: But one shall fill  
The hallow'd Chair, in each ungodly art  
Long vers'd, who well can act a double part,  
And thwart with seeming love th' Imperial Will.

*St. xxix. l. 3. — Imperial HENRY's dust]* HENRY, the Seventh  
Emperor of that name, surnamed of LUXEMBURGH, who died early  
while he was endeavouring to settle the troubles of ITALY.

XXXI.

“ Nor long the Chair shall feel his odious weight,  
Down, down, like light’ning, to th’ infernal state,  
Lanch’d by the Hand divine, the GUELF shall go;  
There, ’midst the MAGIANS in the burning Lake,  
His place the Denizen of Hell shall take,  
And fend his Predecessor down below.”

END OF THE THIRTIETH CANTO.



## CANTO THE THIRTY-FIRST.

---

### ARGUMENT.

BEATRICE takes her Place in the Empyreum, and sends the Spirit of St. BERNARD to the Poet, to describe to him the following Scenes.

---

IN circles verging from the central bow'r,  
Like the fair foliage of a snow-white flow'r,  
Orb within Orb, the cohorts of the Blest  
Delighted fate ; while round the point of Noon,  
Wide hov'ring warblers, with FAVONIAN tune,  
O'er the fair scene a purple umbrage cast.

### II.

In holy hymns their heav'nly Sire they sung,  
Then o'er th' ELYSIAN scene in transport hung,  
Blessing and blest'd ; like HYBLA's swarms below,  
Thro' germinating joys a while they stray'd,  
Then, rising on the blast with wings display'd,  
Up to the welkin soar'd, a splendid shew.

III.

With inexpressive Love their aspects glow'd,  
A golden gleam their spreading pinions show'd,  
And their white vestments floated on the breeze;  
There, as in many a maze they fleet around,  
New joys, deep kindling o'er the deep profound,  
Breath'd the sweet calm of everlasting Peace.

IV.

They fann'd the kindling ardours of the Sky,  
And round diffus'd a glow of gen'ral joy  
Over the splendid courts and burning Sphere;  
And, tho' a boundless prospect interpos'd,  
My eye commanded all the winged Host,  
Still as they sunk and soar'd, distinct and clear.

V.

Such is the nature of Celestial Light,  
It to the faithful gives angelic sight,  
Each dim terrestrial cloud dispersing far;  
These holy Squadrons, at whatever time  
They took their station in these Courts sublime,  
Of Light and Love an equal bounty share.

VI.

GREAT TRINAL POW'R, from whose omnific beam  
New transports in these Bands for ever stream,

*St. iv. l. 1. They fann'd the kindling ardours, &c.]* The nature of active Benevolence, and of every species of virtuous exertion, whether with regard to the social virtues, or those which more immediately regard ourselves, seems to be represented in the allegory; as the faculties of the Mind not only acquire new vigour by exercise, but society reaps the advantage not only of the benefits conferred but of the example given.



Look downward, and with holy calm allay  
The low-borne hurricane that beats so fore,  
And wastes so wide the desolated shore,  
Shedding thick darkness o'er my wint'ry day.

VII.

If those that roam o'er SCYTHIA's snowy bound,  
Where fair CALISTO runs her lofty round  
With her bright Son about the Northern Star,  
Wonder'd to see majestic ROME of yore  
In her proud zenith of Imperial Pow'r ;  
Think with what eyes I view'd this prospect fair.

VIII.

Judge my surprize, so lately call'd from Earth,  
To view the secrets of the Second Birth,  
From the short glimpses of the changing Moon  
To the bright dawn of everlasting Light,  
From FLORENCE, plung'd in crimes and *Stygian* Night,  
To sunless climes beneath eternal Noon !

IX.

Between Surprize and Joy, my dubious Mind  
To paint the wond'rous scene no words could find,  
Nor wish'd to hear. As on a solemn Fane  
Intent, a Pilgrim's eyes are seen to dwell,  
Resolv'd her miracles of art to tell,  
In silence thus I view'd the heav'nly Train.

X.

Wide wand'ring o'er the labyrinth of Light,  
Above, below, I turn'd my raptur'd fight

O'er the wide theatre, from stage to stage ;  
And now the whole circumference I view'd, [stood,  
Where, cheer'd by Heav'n's broad smile, the Ransom'd  
Gather'd from many a clime and various age.

XI.

With aspect all benign, they blest'd the view,  
Those joys returning which from Heav'n they drew,  
And spoke the soul of Love in ev'ry glance ;  
In ev'ry look celestial Virtue glow'd,  
Each gesture bland a faintly spirit show'd,  
That rapt my faculties in holy trance.

XII.

While in this wond'rous post, exalted high,  
I look'd on all the Holy Family,  
Fix'd in their glorious posts, or moving round ;  
Then, with new-kindled wish, that inly burn'd  
To learn the secrets of their state, I turn'd  
To Her, who led me thro' the sacred bound.

XIII.

While I delay'd to ask the fainted Dame  
To clear my rising doubts, a Senior came ;  
Clad in the drapery of Heav'n he stood,  
His look, his gesture, ere he spoke, confess'd  
The warm paternal feelings of the Blest,  
And all the virtues of the great and good.

XIV.

“ Where is my kind æthereal Guide ?” I cry'd.  
Mildly he said, “ Let ev'ry thought subside

That dwells on *her* ; to calm your fears I came,  
And chace your anxious doubts, at her request :  
In yon' third stage, enthron'd among the Blest,  
You yet may see the heav'n-translated Dame."

XV.

I look'd aloft, and saw her beamy Throne ;  
Clear rays converging from th' empyreal Zone,  
Fashion'd of woven beams, a bright Tiar,  
Decking with heav'nly gems the Virgin's brow,  
Far more replendent than the show'ry bow,  
Full moon, or summer fun, or dawning star.

XVI.

Not from the centre to th' extremeft bound,  
Where forked light'nings dance the welkin round,  
So wide a distance seem'd, as from my eye  
To her, who, crown'd with glory, fate above ;  
Yet, wing'd with ev'ry glance, the shaft of Love  
Still reach'd my heart acrofs the boundless Sky.

XVII.

" O thou, in whom my hopes for ever bloom,  
Who bore for me the deep TARTAREAN gloom,  
The fight of torture, and the Stygian yell,  
With heartfelt gratitude I recognize  
Thro' thee the matchless bounty of the Skies,  
And feel my heart with strong affection swell !

XVIII.

" In each gradation from the Vale of Death  
To this bright Scene, where flow'rs celestial breathe,

You loos'd a link of that enormous chain  
That bound me to the joys beneath the Moon ;  
In various modes, to me the heav'nly Boon  
You gave ; O may it ne'er be giv'n in vain !

XIX.

“ That heav'nly Image glowing in my breast  
Preserve, in these ELYSIAN tints, express'd  
By thy celestial art ; protect the Soul  
Which thou hast fav'd, from each contagious stain,  
That, when releas'd from this corporeal chain,  
Its fiery essence may ascend the Pole.”

XX.

Thus my oraisons flow'd : the fainted Maid  
Her approbation in a smile convey'd,  
Soft as in Autumn's eve the rising Moon ;  
Then, gazing upward, met with ravish'd sight  
New emanations from the fount of Light,  
Doubling the glories of th' empyreal Noon.

XXI.

Then thus her rev'rend Delegate began :  
“ The end that crowns your journey, *Son of Man*,  
I am decreed to shew, at her request :  
Nor less inspir'd by Love's æthereal flame,  
Tho' bosom'd in celestial bliss, I came,  
A Guide immortal to a mortal guest.

XXII.

“ O'er this fair scene of Paradise extend  
Thy sight ; the BEATIFIC VIEW will lend

New vigour to thy mental pow'rs, decreed  
Yet far thro' yon' superior world to soar ;  
She, whom my inmost faculties adore,  
Has sent her BERNARD here thy steps to lead."

XXIII.

As when the rude CROATIAN PILGRIM sees  
The sacred semblance of the PRINCE OF PEACE  
Stamp'd on the sacred Veil by art divine,  
Tracing the lineaments with glad surprize,  
" Is this the image of my God ?" he cries,  
And with new transport views the hallow'd Sign.

XXIV.

At once, the fervor of the heav'nly Sire  
Woke in my breast a correspondent fire,  
Like that, which, in the world of Woe beneath,  
Deep contemplation kindled in the dust,  
And gave his Soul that keen empyreal gust,  
Long ere the holy Man resign'd his breath.

XXV.

" By gazing on the Prospect thus below,  
You ne'er its full magnificence can know ;

*St. xxiii. l. 2. The sacred semblance—*] The VERONICA, or holy handkerchief, on which our Saviour's features are said to have been miraculously stamped, in his last agony in the Garden : it is said to be still preserved at ROME.

*St. xxv. l. 1. By gazing on the Prospect, &c.]* It is not clear whether DANTE means that he had hitherto looked on the scene in an horizontal view, or at least confined his prospect within a few degrees of it ; or whether he is to be understood as having, till now, perceived these splendid exhibitions in a sort of miraculous adumbration reflected by the river described above.

Lift up your eyes, and boldly view the bound  
Of yon' celestial Arch ; behold the Queen  
Of Heav'n, how she adorns the living Scene,  
And how yon' supplants bend with awe profound."

XXVI.

I look'd aloft, and as the Orient glows  
With deeper tint when SOL his aspect shows,  
Than where his wheels descend with swift career,  
So a deep radiance to my wond'ring eyes  
Seem'd up th' æthereal amplitude to rise,  
Whose glorious Lamp illum'd the utmost Sphere.

XXVII.

And as, when we expect the golden Team,  
Whence CLYMEN'S Son was cast in PADUS' stream,  
Before the glowing East the Stars decay,  
So this fair Ensign of a brighter Morn  
Seem'd with new light the region to adorn,  
And thus its rivals seem'd to fade away.

XXVIII.

Fanning with many a plume the limpid air,  
An heav'nly Chorus round the Vision fair  
Sung jubilee, like an ambrosial cloud  
Spreading its golden canopy afar ;  
The Virgin smil'd, like PHOSPHOR'S rising Star,  
And with new joy the mix'd Assembly glow'd.

XXIX.

Could I a glorious drefs of words bestow  
On those rich scenes, that in my fancy glow,

The faintest shade of that celestial Scene  
I would not dare to paint ; the holy Sire  
And I, replete with sympathetic fire,  
Gaz'd on the glories of the VIRGIN QUEEN.

*St. xxix. l. 6. — VIRGIN QUEEN.] Viz. the Virgin MARY.*

END OF THE THIRTY-FIRST CANTO.





## CANTO THE THIRTY-SECOND.

---

### ARGUMENT.

The Poet describes the Order of the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Evangelists, in their several Stations; and relates a Solution given by the Spirit of St. BERNARD to some Doubts that arose in his Mind.

---

STOOPING from Contemplation's lofty height,  
 With humbler office pleas'd, the Heir of Light  
 Thus deign'd to shew the secrets of the Blest,  
 And their employments, to the Son of Man;  
 And thus again, with aspect mild, began  
 To paint the regions of eternal rest :

### II.

“ Behold that Beauty, whose æthereal charms,  
 Excelling human grace, the bosom warms;  
 At MARY's feet the lovely Stranger lies :  
 See! with what gratitude she lifts her look  
 To her, whose SON th' EGYPTIAN bondage broke,  
 And gave for sin the balsam of the Skies!

III.

“ ’Tis she, whose error barb’d the fatal dart  
Of Sin, and gave it passage to the heart :

REBECCA there with RACHEL sit below,  
Your Guide with SARAH joins, an holy pair,  
And, station’d at her side, BETHULIA’s Fair  
Displays the civic garland on her brow.

IV.

“ Then she, from whom the regal Poet sprung,  
Who steep’d in tears his penitential song ;  
Then, in long order, all that lov’d to guide,  
In the dark regions of the world beneath,  
Their painful progress by the lamp of Faith,  
In various orders fill the Concave wide.

V.

“ Follow my guiding hand, with watchful eyes ;  
Yon’ sev’nfold range that seems to prop the Skies,  
The blooming Pride contains of JACOB’s race,  
A bevy made for Heav’n in ranks dispos’d,  
As Faith below the portion’d Light disclos’d  
To ev’ry beauteous Denizen of Grace.

VI.

“ As ’midst his blooms the studious Florist strays,  
And ev’ry stem thro’ all the painted maze

*St. iii. l. 1. ’Tis she—*] EVE.

3. REBECCA,] Wife to ISAAC.

3. RACHEL,] Wife to JACOB.

4. SARAH,] Wife to ABRAHAM ; described as sitting  
with BEATRICE.

5. BETHULIA’s Fair,] JUDITH.

Distinctly views, I mean your search to guide,  
Where yon' wide Host the full Assembly shows  
(As when in Summer-pride the garden glows)  
Of all, who on the coming CHRIST rely'd.

VII.

“ Nearer the dusky space that lies between,  
And marks with shadowy cone the splendid Scene,  
Parting, with dim Eclipse, the circling ray ;  
In radiant Files the happy Bands are found,  
Who, on the lapse of Time's revolving round,  
Already saw their Saviour's natal Day.

VIII.

“ And as the female Camp is seen to spread,  
From MARY's bright Imperial Throne display'd,  
Confronting her, the BAPTIST fits sublime,  
And counts an equal Host ; tho', far beneath,  
A few sad years he walk'd the shades of Death,  
Before EMMANUEL paid the STYGIAN gloom.

IX.

“ Beneath his glorious feet his Pupils lie,  
Reposing on the bosom of the Sky,  
Far as the eye can reach, in many a stage  
Circling the mighty void ; AUGUSTINE there,  
FRANCIS, and holy BENEDICT, appear,  
With many a Saint renown'd from age to age.

St. v, vi.] The Department of the HEBREW and CHRIST-  
IAN Women, distinguished by Faith and Charity.

X.

“ Thus, either wing of this celestial Host  
 Its equal Legions of the Blest can boast ;  
 But in yon’ space between, a vast profound,  
 The ransom’d Souls possess a lower Sky,  
 Who on another’s virtue must rely,  
 Redeem’d, ere Reason fill’d its tardy round.

XI.

“ Their smiles, that like the infant dawn appear,  
 Their gentle modulations, soft and clear,  
 Distinguish them from all the Blest above:  
 You seem to doubt, but soon, like op’ning Day,  
 Your doubts, by Grace dispell’d, shall melt away,  
 When Heav’n displays her Mysteries of Love.

XII.

“ Chance has no empire here, nor Want, nor Woe ;  
 Whate’er you see, from Heav’n’s appointment flow,  
 True as the Image to the plastic Mould ;  
 Those Tribes, that mount to Heav’n on various plume,  
 As sov’reign Wisdom gives, each lot assume  
 Their various stations in the heav’nly Fold.

XIII.

“ The Sov’reign of the Blest, who still bestows  
 Those joys that ev’ry happy Being knows,

*St. x. l. 4. The ransom’d Souls—] i. e. Of those who die in infancy, and are redeemed (according to the Theology of the times) by the merits of our Saviour, without performing the conditions.*

Nor lets a Creature here of Want complain,  
At its Creation portions out his Grace,  
As sov'reign Reason wills, in time and place,  
To ev'ry Order of his subject Train.

XIV.

“ This may suffice ; let Scripture tell the rest :  
ESAU rejected, and his Brother blest'd,  
Contended in the womb before their birth ;  
The kindred Love descends where'er it finds  
Congenial fuel in regen'rate Minds,  
Where Grace can breed the Plant of genuine worth.

XV.

“ Their Parent's Faith, with their innoxious state  
Combining, fix'd at once their happy fate :

*St. xiv. l. 2. Esaus rejected,*] This is only (according to the best Commentators) meant of the promulgation of the Mosaic Law by the descendants of JACOB, when those of ESAU were left to the light of Nature, and of the Patriarchal traditions. (See RAMSAY'S Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion, part ii.) But it is not to be supposed that *they* were therefore less favoured ; for the *Gentiles*, that have not the law, yet do *by nature* the things of the law, are entitled to a share in the benefits of Redemption, as may be inferred from St. PAUL'S words : and our Saviour himself says, “ it will be more tolerable for TYRE and SIDON,” that is, even for the impenitent *Sinners* among the Heathen, than for impenitent Sinners under Revelation ; plainly implying, that the virtuous, in both situations, shall reap the fruits of their virtue.

The present Bishop of LINCOLN has ably elucidated, in a few words, that remarkable text of St. PAUL, Rom. viii. 29. “ Whom he foreknew, them he also predestinated ;” *i. e.* Those whose voluntary obedience to the call of Grace and the voice of Conscience he foresaw, them he predestinated to happiness, as being qualified for it.—Bishop of LINCOLN on the seventeenth Article.

The Rite of Blood, in darker times, assur'd  
 Their title to the Skies ; in days of Grace,  
 The Fount that clears primeval sin had place,  
 And their eternal Happiness secur'd.

XVI.

“ But leave these doubts for Time to clear away,  
 And learn from that sweet Face to bear the ray  
 Of full Divinity, which soon will shine  
 On your material Orbs.” I rais'd my eye,  
 And saw, descending from a loftier Sky,  
 O'er her transcendent charms, a Light divine.

XVII.

Half thro' the Glory seen, a sudden flight  
 Of hov'ring Angels seem'd to watch the Light ;  
 But such a glorious glimpse its moving Beam  
 In that æthereal Countenance reveal'd,  
 That all my senses in oblivion held,  
 Sunk down at once beneath the sweet extreme.

XVIII.

The first, that gliding down the Beam appear'd,  
 With humble act the holy Maid rever'd :  
 “ Hail sov'reign Dame ! endow'd with heav'nly  
 Grace.”  
 I saw the umbrage of his wings display'd,  
 I heard afar those hallow'd sounds convey'd,  
 By the full Chorus, o'er th' æthereal Space :

St. xvi. l. 6. —*transcendent charms,*] i. e. Of the Virgin MARY.

XIX.

“ O Sage ! in pity leave the heav’nly Choir,  
A while to fatisfy a Man’s desire ;  
Say, who is he that hails the facred Maid,  
With fuch peculiar fervour in his eye,  
As if from thence he drank celestial Joy ?”  
I fpoke ; and thus, the rev’rend Senior faid :

XX.

“ Tranfport like his we all would wifh to know ;  
’Twas he that told, with triumph on his brow,`  
To that celestial Fair, the facred Freight  
That foon fhould fill her Womb ; but view around,  
What throng’d Patricians hide the heav’nly ground,  
In all the fplendours of empyreal ftate.

XXI.

“ Thofe two, that feem to lead the heav’nly Choir  
With equal ftep, are Man’s primeval Sire  
With CEPHAS rank’d ; the central Stems they feem  
Of that far fpredding fupra-mundane ROSE :  
The left is his, whole weaknefs caus’d our woes,  
The haplefs Fount of Sin’s polluted Stream.

XXII.

“ The right is his, to whom his Lord confign’d  
The Keys of Heav’n, with pow’r to loofe and bind ;

*St. xx. l. 2. ’Twas he that told,—*] The Angel GABRIEL.

*St. xxi. l. 2. —Man’s primeval Sire,*] ADAM.

3. CEPHAS] PETER.

Behind, the Prophet comes, in holy trance,  
Who, thro' the long extent of times to come,  
Saw, with prefaging heart, the gath'ring Gloom  
Of future storms, o'er SALEM's Hills advance.

XXIII.

“ He, that with Manna fed the moving Host,  
There stands, with interchanging beam oppos'd  
To him ; and ANNA, by th' Apostle's side,  
Beholds her Daughter with a Mother's joy,  
In yon' æthereal Conclave thron'd so high,  
And in eternal Songs of praise employ'd.

XXIV.

“ There, to the Parent of the human Race  
Oppos'd, the gentle LUCIA finds her place,  
Who sent BEATRICE to the world beneath,  
To drag you trembling from the gloomy steep,  
Where late, suspended o'er the raging Deep,  
You seem'd just plunging in the Vale of Death.

XXV.

“ But swift the moments fly, we here must pause,  
Nor dare to trench upon th' eternal Laws,

*St. xxii. l. 3. Behind, the Prophet—*] St. JOHN, who saw the  
APOCALYPSE.

*St. xxiii. l. 1. He,—*] MOSES.

3. ANNA,] Supposed by the Authors of *Traditionary History*, the Mother of the Virgin MARY. The ANNA in the first of Luke is not meant.



That bound our Voyage thro' the realms above ;  
One task remains, and that a task of joy,  
Thro' his effulgent robe of Light to spy  
(As far as Sight can reach) the SOURCE OF LOVE.

XXVI.

“ In that great Ocean, when you leave the Shore,  
Soon will you sink at once, to rise no more,  
Unless supernal Grace your pinions plume :  
But let your heart with my orisons rise,  
Soon will the Vestal's hand unbar the Skies,  
And beatific Views your Sight illumine.”

END OF THE THIRTY-SECOND CANTO.



## CANTO THE THIRTY-THIRD.

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### ARGUMENT.

After a Prayer by the Spirit of St. BERNARD, the Poet is introduced to a nearer View of the beatific Vision, and sees emblematically the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

---

“ O VIRGIN! who thy soft attraction drew  
From him, who ow'd his mortal Form to you,  
Whose lowly Mind those Angel plumes admir'd  
That rais'd thee to the Stars; the mighty Plan  
Of Man's Salvation, which in Heav'n began,  
Thro' thee deriv'd, new energy acquir'd.

### II.

“ On thee the Majesty of Heav'n bestow'd  
Such matchless honour, that the SON OF GOD  
Came from the Skies, and chose that humble Shrine,  
Where, for a time, he deign'd his Light to shrowd;  
Then, like the Sun emerging from a Cloud,  
Call'd forth to Light and Life those Germs divine.

III.

“ Hence Charity derives her fervent glow,  
And Hope on heav’nly prospects lives below ;  
    The Souls, that to another Fount apply  
Than thy First-born, a broken cistern find,  
And, with judicial impotence of Mind,  
    Try with a plumeless wing to mount the Sky.

IV.

“ By thee preventing Grace each bold demand  
Heeds not, but oft bestows, with lib’ral hand,  
    Her choicest Blessings on the Heart contrite ;  
The mingled bounties of the heav’nly Throne,  
And soft Compassion’s stores, by thee were shown,  
    Which ransom’d Nature fill’d with new delight.

V.

“ The Man, that from the STYCIAN world below  
Has found his way to this OLYMPIAN brow,  
    Climbing aloft by that stupendous Vine,  
From bough to bough, that o’er the ample Face  
Of this dread Universe its Shade displays,  
    To his last labour craves thy help divine.

VI.

“ Not for myself I long’d so much of old,  
The BEATIFIC VISION to behold,  
    As now for him the heav’nly Boon to gain ;  
O holy Virgin, purge his mental eye,  
From thy bright glance new energy supply,  
    Nor let thy Suppliant’s vows be breath’d in vain.

VII.

“ O heav’nly Maid ! with matchless pow’r endow’d,  
As from his Mind you chace th’ opposing Cloud,  
    So guard him from th’ intolerable Beam,  
Which else would turn his ecstasy to pain,  
And quite destroy the fabric of his brain,  
    Far, far too weak to bear the fierce extreme.

VIII.

“ O guard, celestial Maid ! the sacred Trust !  
See these uplifted palms that once were dust,  
    From ev’ry stage of this OLYMPIAN Choir,  
All rais’d to thee, with HERS that show’d the Path,  
Thro’ the tremendous haunts of Sin and Death !  
    Relent, sweet Maid, and grant their warm desire !”

IX.

A sacred smile, that seem’d to melt the Sky,  
From the twin Stars of everlasting Joy,  
    Accordance gave ; then to the Source of Light  
Mine eyes I rais’d, that felt a fiercer gleam  
Than e’er from op’ning Heav’n was seen to stream  
    On the dim organs of terrestrial sight.

X.

But I, that now my strong desire beheld  
So near completion, found each wish repell’d,  
    And quench’d with the cold drops of holy fear :  
At length the Senior gave the awful sign,  
His looks inspir’d my Soul with force divine,  
    That seem’d new wing’d to mount the heav’nly sphere.

XI.

He smil'd my kindling ardours to behold,  
For, with new life inspir'd, erect and bold,  
I met the Prospect with untroubled gaze ;  
My visual nerves, by uncreated Light  
Sustain'd, still inward, like an Eagle's sight,  
Sent my keen eye-beam thro' th' empyreal Blaze.

XII.

But there such Wonders on my senses broke,  
It shakes my Soul like Heav'n's æthereal stroke,  
No tongue can tell what prospects met my eyes!  
Even the fair Pictures, tho' by Heav'n pourtray'd  
On the frail tablet of the Mem'ry, fade  
Like setting splendours in the Ev'ning Skies.

XIII.

As when the faculties, arous'd from sleep,  
Of some wild dream the strong impression keep,  
Till o'er the awful scene Oblivion holds  
Her cloudy palm, and blots the Vision fair,  
Then gradual draws a veil of formless air,  
Which soon each evanescent Shape enfolds.

XIV.

Such was my feeling, as the Vision fled,  
A mingled thrilling sense of love and dread ;  
It vibrates in my heart, and burns my brain  
Ev'n now ; and, oh ! how quick it seem'd to go,  
As to an APRIL Sun the drifted snow,  
In vapours rising from the vernal plain.

XV.

The pictur'd Series thus of times to come,  
 On leaves design'd, within her lonely room,  
 By SYBILL's hands, the wanton breeze destroys :  
 " O all-surpassing Source of raptures high,  
 One scintillation to my Mind supply,  
 One glimpse, to shew the Source of heav'nly joys !

XVI.

" O tune my tongue to that seraphic strain,  
 That bids the Image, duly press'd, remain  
 Upon the gen'ral Mind and on my own !  
 That some faint trace, tho' by reflexion view'd,  
 May give a Semblance of the SOV'REIGN GOOD,  
 To the dark Souls confin'd beneath the Moon."

XVII.

With Beam direct, I fac'd the vivid Light,  
 By Instinct led ; for had I turn'd my sight  
 The least degree askance, the blinding Beam  
 In sudden Night had quench'd my visual pow'rs ;  
 But this I met with more collected force,  
 The noontide Glory in its fierce extreme.

XVIII.

By uncreated energy refin'd,  
 Boldly I dar'd to scan th' ETERNAL MIND :  
 O heav'nly Grace, that thus benignant bore  
 A Mortal's daring eyes, that travell'd far  
 Amid thy wonders, till th' eternal Bar,  
 Uprais'd by Mercy, bade me look no more.

XIX.

Yet I beheld, before the Vision clos'd,  
 These awful Pow'rs that rule the heav'nly Host,  
 And Nature's universal reign, combin'd  
 In one eternal act ; each substance there,  
 Each accident and mode, distinct and clear,  
 I saw reflected in the heav'nly Mind.

XX.

Yet all those strange varieties in one  
 Full on my eyes in cloudless splendour shone,  
 Without a mixture, and without a shade ;  
 I bore the sight, 'twas no illusive spell,  
 For yet with transport on the thought I dwell,  
 Tho' faintly to my inward eye convey'd.

XXI.

One moment of Oblivion swept away  
 More from the Mind, on that distinguish'd day,  
 Than the whole course of Time's o'erbearing tide  
 Could drown, from the first dawn of op'ning Light,  
 Till then, when NEPTUNE saw, with new delight,  
 Tall ARGO'S Shadow on his furies ride.

XXII.

The splendid Scene, with strong attraction drew  
 My pow'rs, all cent'ring in the glorious view,  
 And as I gaz'd, I kindled at the sight ;  
 No Mortal from the glorious view could turn,  
 Tho' Worlds should dance and Planets round him burn,  
 And ev'ry charm to lure his eyes unite.

[ St. xix, xx. ] See Extract from MALEBRANCHE, at the beginning of the Volume.



XXIII.

All good that fills the universal Sphere,  
Thro' boundless time and space, is centred here ;  
And all perfections else, wherever found,  
Altho', compar'd to that transcendent ray,  
Like gath'ring mists they seem, that cloud the day,  
When in their Orbs they light the mundane round.

XXIV.

My imperfection spoils the heav'nly theme ;  
The Infant thus, that quaffs the milky stream,  
Mars her incipient words with wailing cry :  
Yet an unvary'd semblance here was seen ;  
What now it is, the GODHEAD still has been,  
And Chance or Change must ever more defy.

XXV.

Yet to spiritual organs, far refin'd  
Above material Sense, th' eternal Mind,  
Tho' ONE itself, a changing aspect wore ;  
More glorious far, and more intensely bright,  
The Vision seem'd, as with a sharper sight  
I try'd the glorious Prospect to explore.

XXVI.

THREE Splendours seem'd their Glories to unite,  
And then diverge amid th' abyfs of Light,  
Each catching in their turn the running Blaze ;  
As if three colours of the show'ry bow,  
With bright alternate hues, were seen to glow,  
For ever blending in a radiant maze.

XXVII.

The central Glory seem'd a rising Fire,  
 Darting on either side his flaming spire!—  
 Alas! how poorly do my words express  
 Ev'n the faint Picture that my Fancy drew!  
 And that, how far beneath the wond'rous View!  
 It were abuse of words to call it less.

XXVIII.

Thou self-existent Beam, where all to come,  
 Present and past, within the ample womb  
 Of deep Duration held, to being spring  
 At once, I saw you with unbounded joy,  
 As if a second dawn illum'd the Sky,  
 Soaring to catch thy flight with flaming wing.

XXIX.

With sudden glance, the sun-bright Mirror show'd  
 A radiant Form, that seem'd an human God;  
 His regal mien, and sweet ELYSIAN glance,  
 As with a spell, my whole attention caught;  
 On the fair Vision still, absorpt in thought,  
 I hung, like one in soft delicious trance.

XXX.

As the GEOMETER, with studious pain,  
 To square the circle, plies his art in vain  
 The reconciling principle to find;  
 So ponder'd I, on this strange problem fix'd,  
 When Manhood shone so bright with GODHEAD mix'd,  
 Matter concrete with pure abstracted Mind.

XXXI.

But ill could mortal Sense this fight explore,  
 Until a lucid Hand, extended o'er  
     My straining eyes, the Miracle display'd,  
 Bright as empyreal Noon, which Heav'n denies  
 To paint!—O may his Will, that rules the Skies,  
     In this and all, be evermore obey'd!

END OF THE COMMEDIA OF DANTE.



\*\*\* *The Reader has here an Opportunity of comparing a Representation of future Happiness, given by an ENGLISH Poet of the seventeenth Century (Mr. G. FLETCHER), with the Descriptions in the PARADISO of DANTE. It is taken from a Poem of his called CHRIST'S TRIUMPH OVER DEATH.*

NOR let the Prince of Peace his Beadsman blame,  
That with his Stewart dares his Lord compare,  
And heav'nly Peace with earthly Quiet shame;  
So Pines to lowly Plants compared are,  
And light'ning Phœbus to a little Star :  
And well I wot, my rhyme, albe unsmooth,  
Ne says but what it means, ne means but footh,  
Ne harms the good, ne good to harmful Person doth.

II.

Gaze but upon the House where Man embow'rs;  
With flow'rs and rushes paved is his way,  
Where all his creatures are his Servitours;  
The Winds do sweep his chambers ev'ry day,  
And Clouds do wash his rooms, the cieling gay,  
Starred aloft, the gilded Knobs embrace :  
If such a house God to another gave, [have!  
How shine those glitt'ring courts, he for himself will

III.

And if a fullen Cloud, as fad as Night,  
 In which the Sun may seem embodied,  
 Depur'd of all his dross, we see so white,  
 Burning in melted gold his wat'ry head,  
 Or, round with iv'ry edges silvered ;  
     What Lustre super-excellent will he  
     Lighten on those that will his Sunshine see,  
 In that all-glorious Court in which all Glories be ?

IV.

If but one Sun, with his diffusive fires,  
 Can paint the Stars, and the whole world with Light,  
 And joy and life into each heart inspires,  
 And ev'ry Saint shall shine in Heav'n as bright,  
 As doth the Sun in his transcendent might,  
     (As Faith may well believe what Truth once says,)  
     What shall so many Suns' united rays,  
 But dazzle all the eyes that now in Heav'n we praise !

V.

Here let my Lord hang up his conqu'ring lance,  
 And bloody armour, with late slaughter warm,  
 And, looking down on his weak Militants,  
 Behold his Saints, 'midst of their hot alarm,  
 Hang all their golden hopes upon his arm,  
     And, in this lower field disparting wide  
     Thro' windy thoughts, that would their sails misguide,  
 Anchor their fleshy ships fast in his wounded side.

VI.

Here may the Band, that now in triumph shines,  
 And that (before they were invest'd thus)  
 In earthly Bodies carry'd heav'nly Minds,  
 Pitch'd round about, in order glorious,  
 Their sunny tents, and houses luminous ;  
     All their eternal Day in songs employing,  
     Joying their end, without end of their joying,  
 While their Almighty Prince destruction is destroying.

VII.

Full, yet without satiety, of that  
 Which whets and quiets greedy appetite,  
 Where never Sun did rise, nor ever set,  
 But one eternal Day, and endless Light,  
 Gives time to those, whose time is infinite,  
     Speaking with thought, obtaining without fee,  
     Beholding him whom never eye could see,  
 And magnifying him that cannot greater be.

VIII.

How can such joy as this want words to speak ?  
 And yet, what words can speak such joy as this !  
 Far from the world, that might their quiet break,  
 Here the glad Souls the face of Beauty kiss,  
 Pour'd out in pleasure on their beds of Bliss ;  
     And, drunk with nectar torrents, ever hold  
     Their eyes on him, whose graces manifold  
 The more they do behold, the more they would behold.

IX.

Their sight drinks lovely fires in at their eyes,  
 Their brain sweet incense with fine breath accloys,  
 That on God's sweating altar burning lies ;  
 Their hungry ears feed on their heav'nly noise,  
 That Angels sing, to tell their untold joys ;  
     Their understanding naked Truth, their wills  
     The all and self-sufficient Goodness fills,  
 That nothing here is wanting but the want of ills.

X.

No sorrow now hangs clouding on their brow,  
 No bloodless malady empales their face,  
 No age drops on their hairs his silver snow,  
 No nakedness their bodies doth embase,  
 No poverty themselves and theirs disgrace,  
     No fear of Death the joy of life devours,  
     No unchaste sleep their precious time deflow'rs,  
 No loss, no grief, no change, wait on their winged hours.

XI.

But now their naked bodies scorn the cold,  
 And from their eyes Joy looks and laughs at Pain ;  
 The Infant wonders how he came so old,  
 And old Man how he came so young again ;  
 Still resting, though from sleep they still restrain :  
     Where all are rich, and yet no gold they owe,  
     And all are Kings, and yet no Subjects know,  
 All full, and yet no time on food do they bestow,



XII.

For things that pass are past, and in this Field,  
 The indeficient Spring no Winter fears ;  
 The Trees together fruit and blossom yield,  
 Th' unfading Lily leaves of silver bears,  
 And crimson Rose a scarlet garment wears ;  
     And all of these on the Saints' bodies grow,  
     Not, as they wont, on baser earth below ;  
 Three Rivers here of milk, and wine, and honey flow.

XIII.

About the holy City rolls a flood  
 Of molten crystal, like a sea of glass ;  
 On which weak stream a strong Foundation flood ;  
 Of living Diamonds the Building was,  
 That all things else besides itself did pass ;  
     Her streets, instead of stones, the Stars did pave,  
     And little pearls for dust it seem to have,  
 On which soft-streaming manna like pure snow did wave.

XIV.

In midst of this City celestial,  
 Where the eternal Temple should have rose,  
 Light'ned th' idea beatifical ;  
 End and beginning of each thing that grows,  
 Whose self no end nor yet beginning knows ;  
     That hath no eyes to see, nor ears to hear,  
     Yet sees and hears, and is all eye and ear ;  
 That no where is contain'd, and yet is ev'ry where,

XV.

Changer of all things, yet immutable ;  
 Before and after all, the first and last ;  
 That moving all, is yet immoveable ;  
 Great without quantity ; in whose forecaſt,  
 Things paſt are preſent, things to come are paſt ;  
     Swift without motion, to whoſe open eye  
     The hearts of wicked Men unbreaſted lie,  
 At once abſent and preſent, far and nigh,

XVI.

It is no flaming luſtre, made of Light ;  
 No ſweet concert, or well-tim'd harmony,  
 Ambroſia, for to feaſt the appetite,  
 Or flow'ry odour, mix'd with ſpicery ;  
 No ſoft embrace, or pleaſure bodily ;  
     And yet, it is a kind of inward feaſt,  
     As harmony that ſounds within the breaſt ;  
 An odour, light, embrace, in which the Soul doth reſt,

XVII.

A heav'nly feaſt no hunger can conſume,  
 A light unſeen, yet ſhines in ev'ry place ;  
 A ſound no time can ſteal, a ſweet perfume  
 No winds can ſcatter ; an entire embrace,  
 That no fatiety can e'er unlace ;  
     Ingrac'd into ſo high a favour there, [wear,  
     The Saints, with their Beau-peers, whole worlds out-  
 And things unſeen do ſee, and things unheard do hear,

XVIII.

Ye bleſſed Souls ! grown richer by your ſpoil,  
 Whoſe loſs, though great, is cauſe of greater gains ;  
 Here may your weary Spirits reſt from toil,  
 Spending your endleſs Ev'ning that remains,  
 Amongſt thoſe white Flocks, and celeftial Trains,  
     That feed upon their Shepherd's eyes, and frame  
     That heav'nly muſic, of ſo wond'rous fame,  
 Pfalming aloud the holy honours of his Name.

XIX.

Had I a voice of ſteel to tune my ſong,  
 Were ev'ry verſe as ſmooth as ſmootheſt glaſs,  
 And ev'ry member turned to a tongue,  
 And ev'ry tongue were made of ſounding braſs ;  
 Yet all that ſkill, and all this ſtrength, alas !  
     Should it preſume t' adorn (were miſadviſ'd)  
     The place, where David hath new ſongs deviſ'd,  
 As in his burning throne he fits emparadiſ'd.

XX.

But now ſuch lively colours did embeam  
 His ſparkling forehead, and ſuch ſhining rays  
 Kindled his flaming locks, that down did ſteam  
 In curls along his neck ; where ſweetly plays  
 (Singing his wounds of love in ſacred lays)  
     His deareſt Spouſe, Spouſe of the deareſt Lover,  
     Knitting a thouſand knots over and over,  
 And dying ſtill for love, but they her ſtill recover.

XXI.

Fairest of Fairs ! that at his eyes doth dress  
Her glorious face, those eyes from whence are shed  
Attractions infinite ; where, to express  
His love, high God ! all Heav'n as captive leads,  
And all the banners of his Grace dispreads,  
    And in those windows doth his arms englaze,  
    And on those eyes the Angels all do gaze,  
And from those eyes the Lights of Heav'n obtain their  
    blaze, &c.

THE END.

## ADDITIONAL NOTE

ON THE

PARADISO, CANTO VII. STANZA 18.

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IF we allow that the race of Mankind, according to the Scripture account, derived their being from an original Pair (a truth which the testimony of History renders at least probable), it will follow, that ADAM, on his creation, would have been reduced to great difficulties on the choice of proper aliments at his first creation, without some direction from his Creator. He could not judge what food was proper for him, without knowledge sufficient to examine his own constitution, the nature of the several fruits before him, and the suitableness of one to the other. Experiment must have, in this case, been his only resource; which might have been as fatal to him as to any of his posterity, great numbers of whom have been destroyed by fruits apparently fair and inviting. In the wisdom of God, which required his preservation, is implied the necessity of some intimation being given him of the means of preserving his being.

If it be objected, that possibly he was created in higher perfection, and with senses more acute than any of his posterity—this being allowed, it so far establishes the truth of Revelation; if it be denied, it shows the necessity of a Revelation, which in that case might naturally be expected from the wisdom and goodness of the Deity.

This account being found consonant to unprejudiced Reason, is confirmed by the Scriptural account. A permission we find there was, accordingly, given to the first Man to eat of all the fruits of the Garden, *except one*, under the penalty of his contracting some mortal infirmity on the infraction of this command. When Reason shews that this direction was necessary, and Scripture informs us that it was given, it is a very strong argument of the truth of this Revelation; for what can be a clearer demonstration of the truth of any historical Record, than demonstrating that it is perfectly conformable to the truth and nature of things?

That irregular appetites are often punished in their indulgence with very deplorable consequences, appears to be the established order of things. Our first Parents were punished, according to this account, for an irregular appetite for interdicted knowledge; which often, in the course of the present state of things, is attended with peculiar punishment. Either the present established order of things always prevailed, or it did not: if it did, ADAM's punishment is accounted for by general analogy—if not, how will the Deist or Infidel prove the instance in which it was suspended?

The penalty of the *first* transgression should, in wisdom and justice, be greater than that of any subsequent transgression, because all depended on the first: or, (if this should be denied,) it was at least consonant to Divine Wisdom, that the punishment of the first transgression should be such as to have the greatest weight with posterity; and it must have been highly conducive to this purpose to have its consequences always before their eyes.

As to the extraordinary nature of this fruit, it is now well known that there are several sorts of fruits, which not only inflame the blood, so as to produce many dreadful distempers; but there are also some that have a deleterious effect upon the mental powers. Might not the forbidden fruit have been of this latter kind? What produces idiotism in the brain of a common Man, may easily be conceived as reducing the faculties of ADAM to the common standard, which we now see in either case. Whatever destroys the dominion of Reason over the passions and appetites, either by inflaming the latter, or impairing the strength of the former, must of necessity have destroyed the perfection of human nature.

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That infirmities and imperfections, mental and bodily, are derived from Parents to their Children, we every day may perceive, (as in the case of the king's evil): this often lasts as long as the race; and without proper remedies, we see no reason why it should not last to the end of the world.

It will appear by the same mode of reasoning, that ADAM must have had dominion given him over the animal creation, and that power ascertained by an original grant; else he must have been liable, not only to molestation, but absolute destruction, before this subordination was firmly established.

If we allow the human intellect to be in ADAM and EVE in a higher state of perfection than in any of their posterity, we shall perceive a reason, why the arguments addressed to EVE were not so dilated and amplified as might be necessary to convince Mankind in their present impaired state of the understanding. Her intellects (though fallible) were, probably, so much superior to ours, that a short hint to *her* would have the same effect that a long deduction would to *us*. The Serpent, therefore, on this supposition, had no reason to say more than he did upon the occasion; nay, if he *had* spoken more, he might have defeated his design, by letting EVE see he had not attained to all that sagacity he pretended to, by eating the forbidden fruit; which must have shewn him, that to an enlightened person like her, a hint was only necessary.

In short, this conference, as recorded, appears a specimen of that short, sagacious mode of reasoning which human nature was capable of in its state of perfection. As, in this case, the Serpent was under no necessity of saying one word more to EVE on this occasion than is here mentioned, it affords a presumptive proof that MOSES, in relating no more than what was said, has discharged the part of a faithful Historian; which he could not have done, had he related one word more.

If we reflect, that what so much distinguished the abilities of Sir ISAAC NEWTON above the generality of Mankind, was his perception of new and remote truths from very simple principles, which many others could not comprehend (even when discovered) without a long train of consequences; the difference between the human intellect  
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in its original perfection and its present general state, will be more apparent, and the reasoning above more conclusive.

The expression of the Woman's *seeing* that it was good for food, and that it was *desirable to make one wife*, implies, that she had perceived its seeming wonderful effects on the Serpent; and consequently, that he had been before in the degraded condition of other brutes.

This conclusion illustrates the argument of the Serpent more effectually, and makes the whole conference between *her* and the Serpent rational and intelligible. That this was MILTON's opinion is evident from his detail of this transaction, as this observation renders that part of his admirable Poem much more interesting.

It may at first sight appear rather strange to us, that EVE should have observed this change in the Serpent without any of those marks of terror and surprize, as *we* should have felt on such an extraordinary occasion. But if we allow that human nature was then in such a degree of perfection, and that Reason had such a dominion over the passions that probably there was no room for those sudden starts of the imagination, nor those sudden tumults and stagnations of the blood and animal spirits, now incident to our condition, it will easily be seen, that EVE must have been, to a great degree, incapable of fear or surprize from such accidents as would disquiet the best of her posterity. This, so far from being an objection to the Mosaic history, rather appears a presumption in its favour. We can at least form a conception of a Mind possessing itself in the utmost serenity on similar occasions, when we reflect upon the composure of FABRICIUS, when the Elephant's proboscis was suddenly raised over his head, and, in turning about, he, for the first time, beheld an animal of such magnitude.

Let the wisest of Mankind at present suppose themselves in EVE's condition in every circumstance, and then, if they reflect, they will find, that this scheme of deception is so far from being impossible or absurd, that it is the most rational, and the best suited to attain its purpose, that even the subtlest of created Spirits can be supposed capable of devising on the occasion.

When we consider the dreadful sentence pronounced against ADAM, compared with the seemingly inadequate denunciation  
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against the Serpent, we shall be led to conclude that an Historian of such abilities as MOSES appears by all his conduct to have been, would not have recorded what relates to the Serpent, if something of more importance than the mere verbal meaning had not been denoted by the expression *of bruising his head*. ADAM and EVE also must have understood this in a sense calculated to afford them and their posterity some important consolation in their degraded condition. He himself could have bruised the reptile's head, or any of his posterity might have done the same, without such a punishment being a suitable compensation for their loss. They, to confirm this expectation, saw an immediate execution of vengeance on the Serpent. His curse inflicted upon him, *above* every beast of the field, implies, that *they* also were cursed; which ST. PAUL also asserts in the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

Had the Serpent been originally formed to go upon his belly, and to eat dust, it would have been no punishment to have continued him in the same condition. We shall perceive the gracious purpose of this immediate degradation of the instrument of Evil to our first Parents, when we recollect that his conference with EVE plainly implies, that he had boasted to her of some intellectual advantages, derived from the fruit which the Tree of Knowledge possessed, *independent* of the power of God. "*God knoweth,*" said he, "*that in the day ye eat thereof ye shall be as Gods.*"—Nothing could so effectually confute this vain boast and wicked insinuation, as letting ADAM and EVE see that imperfection and loss of excellence, was the only *certain* consequence of his delusion, and opposition to the will of God.

Besides, ADAM and EVE (as many of their posterity are apt to do at this day) would be apt to flatter themselves, that, for a transgression so apparently slight, the Almighty would not inflict so rigorous a punishment; not considering, that this guilt was much aggravated by the gentleness of the restraint: but when they saw this Agent of Mischief punished upon the spot, it must have convinced them of the heinousness of their crime, and the certainty of Divine retribution. It was natural for them to argue thus: "*If the mere Instrument of Evil is punished so severely, what will become of the real Actors?*"

Besides, when they found themselves so miserably deluded by the fictitious representation of the Serpent, and both themselves and him rendered deplorable monuments of a malignant fallacy, they must have concluded in such circumstances, that this deception was the contrivance of some being, not only superior to the Serpent, but far superior to themselves;—the work of some SPIRIT, who had taken possession of the Serpent's body, and effected this delusion through his organs.

That ADAM and EVE could have no idea of Spirits, is too absurd to suppose, if we allow that *their* intellects were superior to ours. By an easy deduction, he might have concluded, that the Serpent *itself* could not have deceived EVE, and that the sentence passed upon that animal, the passive instrument of a superior intelligence, must have had some reference to the actuating cause. He must have conceived this as clearly as that the principle of perception in himself was the *real* object of punishment, though the sentence was *literally* pronounced against his body. The very words of the denunciation are plainly directed against an intelligent Being. This consideration could not but ascertain to ADAM the true object of the Divine wrath and vengeance, which could be no other than the evil Spirit who committed the offence.

When he was once fully possessed of this leading idea, all the rest was easy. His next enquiry would naturally be, what was meant by *bruising the Serpent's head*. He could not but know, that the head was the seat of his knowledge and dominion; and therefore he might reasonably conclude, that by this expression, some deadly blow against the power of that Spirit who had swayed the organs of this creature to his destruction, was intended. Some hope he probably conceived;—so much, at least, as to revive and continue some sense of Religion in his Mind. The conquest of a Being superior to himself, must imply much superior abilities in the Conqueror; and if HIS SEED were once possessed of rectitude of will, with abilities equal to so arduous an adventure, they must at least be restored to the primitive perfection of human nature; not to mention the glorious interference of him who is emphatically called THE PROMISED SEED, which this prediction is thought by the best interpreters to imply.

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To ask, as some have done, why this instance of obedience was exacted of ADAM and EVE, and why temptation was thrown in their way, when the Divine Being knew they would transgress, is, in effect, to ask, why God did not create Man independent of his authority, or superior to temptation in any particular instance? It is in reality to ask, why he made him a creature, and why not an absolutely perfect Being; *i. e.* equal in all respects to himself? There could be no dependency without some manifestation of it, which could only be shewn by obedience of some kind; and surely no restraint could be more easy than that which ADAM was subjected to; and what could be more consonant to the goodness and wisdom of God, than the prohibition of a fruit the use of which he knew would be pernicious?

- If a dependence on God was for ADAM's interest, a constant sense of that dependence was no less so; and for this purpose, the propriety of a certain conspicuous memorial of this dependence being always before his eyes, must be apparent on the slightest consideration. Nor was ADAM so hardly dealt with as some are apt to pretend: There is great difference between the correction, and the disinheritation of a Son; the curse upon ADAM and the Earth was the effect of Mercy, in order to render a temporary life and a vexatious world less desirable to him. Though his happiness was impaired, his inheritance was not cut off; and obedience left him still in a capacity of recovering more than he had lost by disobedience.

The grievous penalties inflicted on the Daughter of EVE, attendant on gestation and parturition, compared with the condition of other animals in those respects, seem to indicate some extraordinary reason for the peculiar infliction; a phenomenon which has never been accounted for, unless by the Scripture narrative.

Many marks of Wisdom and Mercy are apparent under the seeming rigour of this dispensation. It is agreeable to Justice, and often to the common course of worldly affairs, that toil, drudgery, and affliction should be the consequence of departing from an easy and rational obedience. It is no less a merciful dispensation, that the Earth, which Man was obliged to leave in consequence of his guilt, should become less desirable. The Divine Wisdom is no less conspicuous in keeping those passions under, which had broke loose

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from the restraints of Reason, and subduing their impetuosity by hard labour; which, unsubdued, or supported in luxury and idleness, would raise such a combustion as would make himself, and all around him, miserable.

His expulsion out of Paradise was, in those circumstances, highly proper; as, in his present corruption, access to the Tree of Life would only have served to perpetuate misery.

To those who deem it strange, that ADAM and EVE should be seduced to such an act of intemperance, when his Reason was supposed to be in such a state of perfection, it may be sufficient to remark, that theirs was rather an intemperance of knowledge, to which the noblest creatures are probably most liable, than a desire of any mere animal enjoyment, by which, in their situation, they were not liable to be molested.

The remarkable enmity between the race of Men and Serpent, seems to corroborate the account of that part of the sentence; and as to the concluding particular of its punishment, it is asserted by PLINY, that it actually feeds on dust; which indeed must be the case in those deserts, where no other sustenance is to be found.—See DELANY'S Dissertations.

## ADDITIONAL NOTE

ON THE

PARADISO, CANTOS XI. and XII.

**L**ONG before the thirteenth Century, the monastic orders, in consequence of their ample revenues, had degenerated from their primitive austerity, and were totally given up to luxury and indolence. Hence they became both unwilling and unable to execute the purposes of their establishments;—to instruct the people, to check the growth of heresies, or to promote, in any respect, the true interest of the Church. They forsook all their religious obligations, despised the authority of their Superiors, and were abandoned without shame or remorse to every species of dissipation and licentiousness. About the beginning of the thirteenth Century, the condition and circumstances of the Church rendered it absolutely necessary to remedy these evils, by introducing a new order of religion, who, being destitute of fixed possessions, by the severity of their manners, a professed contempt of riches, and an unwearied perseverance in the duty of preaching and prayer, might restore respect to the Monastic Institution, and recover the honour of the Church. These were the four orders of mendicant and begging Friars, commonly denominated the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Carmelites, and the Augustines.

These societies soon surpassed all the rest, not only in the purity of their lives, but in the number of their privileges. Not to mention the success which attends all novelties, their reputation arose

quickly to an amazing height. The Popes, among other uncommon immunities, allowed them the liberty of travelling wherever they pleased, of conversing with persons of all ranks, of instructing the youth and people in general, and of hearing confessions without reserve or restrictions; and on these occasions, which gave them opportunities of appearing in public and conspicuous situations, they exhibited more striking marks of gravity and sanctity than were observable in the deportment and conduct of the members of other Monasteries. They were regarded with the highest esteem and veneration throughout all the countries of EUROPE. In the mean time, they gained still greater respect, by cultivating the literature then in vogue with the greatest assiduity and success. GIANONI says, that most of the Theological Professors in the University of NAPLES, newly founded in the year 1220, were chosen from the MENDICANTS. They were the principal Teachers of Theology at PARIS, the School where this science first had received its origin.

At OXFORD and CAMBRIDGE respectively, all the four orders had flourishing Monasteries. The most learned Scholars in the University of OXFORD, at the close of the thirteenth Century, were Franciscan Friars; and long after this period, the Franciscans appear to be the whole support and ornament of that University. Hence it was, that Bishop HUGH DE BALSHAM, Founder of PETER HOUSE at CAMBRIDGE, orders, in his statutes given about the year 1280, that some of his Scholars should annually repair to OXFORD, for improvement in the sciences;—that is, to study under the Franciscan Friars at OXFORD; and that the learned Bishop GROSSEHEAD, in the year 1253, bequeathed all his books to that celebrated Seminary. This was the house in which the renowned ROGER BACON was educated; who revived, in the midst of barbarism, and brought to a considerable degree of perfection, the knowledge of mathematics in ENGLAND, and greatly facilitated many modern discoveries in experimental philosophy. The same Fraternity is likewise said to have stored their valuable library with a multitude of HEBREW Manuscripts, which they purchased of the Jews, on their banishment from ENGLAND.

RICHARD DE BURY, Bishop of DURHAM, Author of *Philobiblon*, and the Founder of a Library at OXFORD, is prais'd

praises of the Mendicants for their extraordinary diligence in collecting books. Indeed, it became difficult, in the beginning of the fourteenth Century, to find any treatise in the Arts, Theology, or Canon Law, commonly exposed to sale, as they were universally bought up by the Friars. This is mentioned by RICHARD FITZ-RALPH, Archbishop of ARMAGH, in his Discourse before the Pope at AVIGNON, in the year 1357.

Their bitter and professed Antagonist, who adds, without any intention of paying them a compliment, that all the Mendicant Convents were furnished with a "grandes & nobiles libraria," Sir RICHARD WHITTINGTON, built the Library of the Grey Friars in LONDON; which is 129 feet long, and 12 feet broad, with 28 desks. About the year 1430, one thousand marks were paid for transcribing the profound NICHOLAS DE LYRA, in two vols. to be chained in the library.

LELAND relates, that JOHN WARDON, a learned Carmelite, bequeathed to the same Library as many manuscripts of approved Authors, written in capital Roman characters, as were then estimated at more than two thousand pieces of gold: he adds, that his Library, even in his time, exceeded all others in LONDON, for multitude of books, and antiquity of copies.—Among many other instances that might be given of the learning of the Mendicants, there is one which greatly contributed to establish their literary character. In the eleventh Century, ARISTOTLE's Writings had been condemned in the University of PARIS as heretical. About an hundred years afterwards, these prejudices began to subside, and new translations of ARISTOTLE's Writings were published in LATIN, by our countryman MICHAEL SCOTUS and others, with more attention to the original GREEK; at least, without the pompous and perplexed circumlocutions which appeared in the ARABIC versions hitherto used. In the mean time, the Mendicant Orders sprung up, who, happily availing themselves of these new translations, and making them the constant subject of their scholastic lectures, were the first who received the doctrines of this Philosopher, and acquired the merit of having opened a new system of science. The Dominicans of SPAIN were accomplished adepts in the learning and language of the ARABIANS, and were employed by the Kings of

SPAIN in the instruction and conversion of numerous Jews and Saracens who resided in their dominions.

The buildings of the Mendicant Monasteries, especially in ENGLAND, were magnificent, and commonly much exceeded those of the endowed Convents of the second magnitude.

The Dominicans and Franciscans were, before the Reformation, exactly what the Jesuits have been since. They disregarded their monastic character and profession, and were employed, not only in spiritual matters, but in temporal affairs of the greatest consequence; in composing the differences of Princes, concluding treaties of peace, and concerting alliances; they presided in cabinet councils, levied national subsidies, influenced courts, and managed the machines of every important operation and event, both in the religious and political world\*.

From what has been here said, it is natural to suppose, that the Mendicants at length became universally odious. The high esteem in which they were held, and the transcendent degree of authority which they had assumed, only served to render them obnoxious to the Clergy of every rank, to Monasteries of other Orders, and to the Universities. It was not from ignorance, but from a knowledge of Mankind, that they were active in propagating superstitious notions, which they knew were calculated to captivate the multitude, and to strengthen the papal interest; yet, at the same time, from the vanity of displaying an uncommon sagacity of thought and superior skill in Theology, they affected novelties in doctrine, which introduced dangerous errors, and tended to shake the pillars of Orthodoxy.

Their ambition was unbounded, their arrogance intolerable. Their increasing numbers became, in many States, an enormous and unwieldy burthen to the commonwealth. They had abused the powers and privileges which had been entrusted to them; and the common sense of Mankind could not long be blinded or deluded by palpable frauds and artifices, which those rapacious Zealots so notoriously practised for enriching their Convents. In ENGLAND, many Theologists attacked the four Orders with great vehemence and severity.

\* See PARADISO, Canto vi. the Story of Romeo.



Exclusive of the jealousies and animosities which naturally subsisted between four rival Institutions, their visionary refinements, and love of dissipation, introduced among them the most violent dissensions.

The Dominicans aimed at popularity, by an obstinate denial of the immaculated conception; but their pretended sanctity at length became a term of reproach, and their learning a discredit.—As polite letters and general knowledge increased, their speculative and pedantic divinity gave way to a more liberal turn of thinking, and a more perspicuous mode of writing.

BALE, who was himself a Carmelite Friar, says, that his Order, which was eminently distinguished for its scholastic erudition, began to lose their estimation about the year 1460. Some of them were imprudent enough to engage openly in political controversies, and the Augustines destroyed all their reputation and authority in ENGLAND by seditious sermons, in which they laboured to supplant the progeny of EDWARD the Fourth, and to establish the title of the Usurper RICHARD. About the year 1530, LELAND visited the Franciscan Friary at OXFORD, big with the hopes of finding, in their celebrated library, if not many valuable books, at least, those which had been bequeathed by the learned Bishop GROSTHEAD. The delays and difficulties with which he procured admittance into this venerable repository, heightened his curiosity and expectations. At length, after much ceremony, being permitted to enter, instead of an inestimable treasure, he saw little more than empty shelves, covered with cobwebs and dust!—See WARTON's Dissertation on the Introduction of Learning into England, prefixed to the first volume of his History of English Poetry.

## ADDITIONAL NOTE

ON THE

PARADISO, CANTO XX.

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ON this long contested controversy, as it is still agitated, though probably it will never, in this world, be thoroughly decided, it will be necessary to say a few words here. To enter at large into the subject, would neither be proper nor necessary in this place, although it is often adverted to by DANTE. One particular in the history of those opinions is somewhat remarkable. The Arminians, or those who held the freedom of the will, during the reigns of ELIZABETH and JAMES, were zealous for the royal prerogative; their Opponents, who supported the doctrine of arbitrary decrees, had acquired this opinion through a popular medium at GENEVA; they, on that account, were more favoured by the multitude, who now beginning to suspect the Court of countenancing popery, for the sake of arbitrary power, by an easy association, suspected every doctrine which was well received at Court, as favouring the system of the Romanists, and the encroachments of regal authority. This, during the reign of CHARLES the First, gave a degree of circulation to the rigid Calvinistical doctrine, which it would not probably have attained under another aspect of political affairs. But in the reign of CHARLES the Second, when HOBBS began to build his system of absolute necessity upon the basis of CALVIN, rational Divines took the alarm; and, as the opinions of CALVIN were now  
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to be tried by their own merits, having lost that political support which originated from the apprehensions of popery in the late reigns, the opinions of ARMINIUS began to be calmly investigated, and became more generally acceptable. The dispute indeed has been revived from time to time, and carried on with various success, but with great ingenuity on both sides. Both parties profess to make the honour of the Deity and his attributes the principal object in this dispute. The Followers of AUSTIN and CALVIN assert, that to make the purposes of the Almighty depend upon the contingent actions of his Creatures, would derogate from his authority and independence; that Creatures in his sight are as nothing, yea, less than nothing; and that his whole purpose in electing some, and reprobating others, according to his own good pleasure, was to show forth his glory; that divine prescience is not compatible with human liberty, as whatever is foreknown must come to pass; and this they endeavour to support by several passages of Scripture, interpreted so as seemingly to favour their hypothesis.

On the other hand, the Arminians insist also on the attributes of God, his holiness, justice, and goodness; and, whereas their adversaries assert that we are not to make our ideas of moral endowment the standard by which we estimate the Divine perfections, they affirm, that the Almighty speaks in Scripture of those very perfections according to human ideas,—nay, he appeals to Men on their conduct, and calls them to *reason* with him.

His Prophets often address the Jewish nation in consonance to this idea. Their overtures imply, that the Divine Being acts in such a manner, that Men, according to the notions which they have of these attributes, may examine them, and will be compelled, by the force of Reason, to justify and approve them. In these God proposes himself to us as our pattern; he displays his attributes for our imitation, as perfections of which we may form a just, though not an adequate idea. We are required to be *holy and merciful, as he is merciful*. But what shall we conceive of a Justice that decrees, that we shall commit sin to justify the previous decree of our reprobation? If those decrees be thus originally designed by the Almighty Being, and are certainly accomplished, then it is incon-

ceivable how there should be a justice in punishing that which God himself appointed, by an antecedent and irreversible decree. He declares repeatedly, that he desires no Man should perish, but have everlasting life, and that he has no pleasure in the death of a Sinner.

If the contrary be the case, if God has determined all the actions of Men by a previous decree, those adjurations to forsake sin, that so often occur in Scripture, are solemn sounds of no meaning. This consequence cannot be avoided, if God intended, that the course of action should not be different, in any respect, from what it is found to be. The chief foundation of this opinion is the following proposition, which, even to an impartial Theist, must, one would think, appear self-evident, *viz.* That nothing can be believed, that contradicts the justice, holiness, the truth, and purity of God; that those attributes are in God according to our notions concerning them (only infinitely more perfect in degree), since we are ordered to imitate them. Whereas the doctrine of absolute decrees does manifestly contradict the clearest ideas we can form of Justice, Holiness, Truth, and Goodness.

If we proceed from the nature of God to the nature of Man, freedom of will seems so necessary to the morality of his actions, that, without it they neither would be good nor evil, neither the objects of reward or punishment.

Persons insane, or under the power of sleep, are not punished for the actions they may have committed in such circumstances. Praise or blame implies some degree, at least, of liberty. If Men think that they are under an inevitable decree, they will have little remorse for any action they may commit; while they impute it to that inevitable fate that constrains them, so they will naturally conclude, that it is to no purpose to struggle with impossibilities. All virtue and religion, nay, all discipline and industry depend upon this,—that there is a power in us to govern our own thoughts and actions. So much as this is evident to every one's experience, notwithstanding the acknowledged corruption and frailty of our nature.

It is found indeed, by woeful experience, that we are often hurried on by the violence of our inclinations, as if we were mere pas-

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five machines; yet, every one feels that he might have restrained this impetuosity in the outset; he feels that he can divert his thoughts and govern himself in the great majority of his pursuits, if his efforts be vigorous, and made with sincerity. He finds that knowledge and reflection, good company and laudable employment, have a great influence on his disposition and morals; and that, on the contrary, *evil communication corrupts good manners*.

If we are unable to act till the impulse comes, and then unable to withstand it, what occasion can there be for all these solemn discourses, when they can have no effect on us? They cannot render us inexcusable, unless they were the means of moral improvement; whereas, to imagine that God gave light and blessing to those, whom he had resolved to consign to eternal misery, only to render them inexcusable, when those admonitions could not be of any use, and could only aggravate their condemnation, gives so strange an idea of infinite goodness, that it is not fit to express it by those terms that naturally arise upon it.

It is hard to suppose two contrary *wills* in God: one enjoining us our duty, and commanding us with the most solemn exhortation to do it; and the other, putting a certain bar in our way, by decreeing that we shall do the contrary.

The Almighty, in this case, must have *two wills*. In this case, the *will* for our good would be ineffectual, whilst the *will* that makes us sin, is infallible. These things seem very hard to be apprehended; they give us strange notions of the Deity; whereas, the basis of true religion consists in right and honourable ideas of the Divine attributes.

The making Mankind free, does not by any means diminish the authority of God, who governs the world according to the various natures of the Beings which he has made. If therefore the acts of the Deity are, or seem to be, in some respect, dependent upon the will of Man, it is no derogation from the dignity or independence of the Creator, but arises from the nature of the Beings which he has made.

The Divine Omnipotence is not lessened, when we observe some of his works to be more beautiful and useful than others are. The irregular productions of Nature do not derogate from the order in  
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which all things appear lovely to the divine Mind. Thus, if the liberty with which he intended to endue thinking Beings, is incompatible with such positive acts and so positive a providence as that with which he governs natural things and this material world; this is no way derogatory to the sovereignty of his Mind. This, in some measure, accounts for the evils which we see in the world, both natural and moral, as it by no means accuses, or diminishes the purity and holiness of God, since he only suffers his Creatures to go on in the free use of those powers which he has given them, with respect to which, however, he executes a special providence; making some Men's sins to be the immediate punishment of their own, or of other Men's transgressions, and restraining them often in a great deal of that evil which they design, and bringing out of it much good, which they do not design; but all is done in a way suitable to their nature, without offering violence to that nature.

The assistance of divine Grace is not incompatible with the free agency of Man. It may awaken and dispose us to our duty, but yet not in such a degree that we cannot withstand its influence. Our own exertions, indeed, are necessary, but our *sufficiency* is from God. God may, in mercy, chuse to counteract the depravity of our heart; but still it remains with us to chuse whether we will attend to his suggestions or not \*.

God is said, in Scripture, to pre-ordain the salvation of the world by Jesus Christ before the creation of Mankind, on certain terms; and those, who he foresaw would perform the conditions required by the Gospel covenant, may be said to be predestinated to life by him; "for whom he did foreknow he did also predestinate." This is the only sense in which predestination appears to our best Divines to be reconcilable to the attributes of God and the free agency of Man. "We are therefore to consider Man as elect, according to the fore-knowledge of God;" that is, as he foresaw that they would be obedient to his laws †.

Those who have ingrafted the modern necessitudinarian scheme upon the old Calvinistic doctrine, have founded their opinion upon an idea, that Mind is wholly passive in obeying the impulse of the pre-

\* BURNET.

† Bishop of LINCOLN.

ponderating motive ; thus confounding physical with moral ideas. The balance in its own nature is passive, but that the Mind is active in its deliberation every Man must feel ; though some of the most noted of the necessitudinarian Writers *deny* it, when they are hard pressed, which seems to me equivalent to giving up the cause.

Though we may not have an accurate idea how motives operate upon the Mind, nor the laws by which volition is produced, yet we feel that we are free to chuse ; and if this be an illusory sensation, we can be sure of nothing, not even of our own existence : all the frightful consequences of scepticism would naturally be implied in such an opinion.

There is (as Dr. KIRWAN has justly observed) a great difference between an action *certainly* following the Divine prescience, and such an action being its *necessary* consequence. God may foresee actions that seem to us contingent, because they will be ; it is not *because* he foresees them that they are, or will be ; in other words, his fore-knowledge has no influence on the volition of the Agent.

Analogy shews us something like this in the common course of worldly affairs. A sagacious Man may, with a considerable degree of probability, conjecture what will, in certain circumstances, be the line of conduct pursued by people with whose characters he is well acquainted, though his sagacity, or prescience, call it which you will, has no influence on the action or actions under consideration ; extend this in degree, and the idea becomes still clear. But there is no analogy, no medium, by which we can reconcile the holiness, the goodness, and justice of God, with the idea of predestination as commonly understood.





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ADDRESS\*

TO THE

SHADE OF DANTE.

---

**H**AIL! Father of the Tuscan Song!  
 Leader of the Shadowy Throng!  
 I see thy fable standard furl'd  
 O'er the dark Plutonian world:  
 I hear thee on the fatal verge  
 Sound afar thy dismal charge:  
 It seems the Trump of final Doom!  
 For see! afar what Spectres come,  
 Flocking from the skirts of Heav'n,  
 At the awful summons giv'n.  
 By the lurid light, I spy  
 Scowling dread in ev'ry eye,

\* This Address was designed for the beginning of the First Volume, but is inserted here as that Volume was printed before it was received.

Or frantic Passion's angry glare,  
 Or the wan look of chill Despair :  
 Still they darken as they go  
 Deeper in the Vale below.  
 The downward path I seem to tread,  
 Thro' various Tribes of sentenc'd dead ;  
 And many a tragic tale I hear,  
 Too horrible for mortal ear,  
 When the pale ascending Ghost  
 Tells in groans, how Heav'n was lost ;  
 There the various Plagues I view,  
 Shar'd among the Stygian Crew ;  
 Dread storms, and more tremendous calms,  
 I see ; I hear unholy psalms  
 Echoing thro' the vast profound,  
 Where some, in iron slumbers bound,  
 Recline, or speed thro' fiery show'rs,  
 Around those formidable bow'rs,  
 Where the Dragon of the deep,  
 With burning eyes that never sleep,  
 Watches when the tortures flake,  
 And calls the Furies from their Lake.  
 BUT SEE ! amid the stony arches bending,  
     O'er the dread vault of Phlegethon afar,  
 Thro' horrors of eternal Night descending,  
     Meek Twilight gleams along the rocky spar.  
     From the deep Tartarean vale,  
 With you again I mount the rugged scale  
     In long laborious march, and spy  
 At last the splendours of the southern sky,

Reflected in the floods that roll \*  
 In blue expanse beneath th' Antarctic Pole.  
 And see! where yonder Vessel steers  
 Its course along! no golden fleece it bears,  
 Nor wealth of Ormus nor of IND,  
 Committed to the waves and faithless wind;  
 But wafts to port a ghostly Throng,  
 That bear their earthly habitudes along:  
 Tho' stripp'd of cumbrous clay,  
 They skim the liquid way.  
 Ah! little did they dream, when late they sow'd  
 Forbidden Pleasure's seeds with lib'ral hand  
 Upon the gale, that o'er the toiling flood,  
 The delegated winds, by Heav'n's command,  
 Should bear them on their wings to yonder strand,  
 And sow them on yon' cloud-encircled steep!  
 There shall the formidable Harvest stand,  
 In many a thorny file, for them to reap.  
 As in successive Tribes they pass the troubled deep.  
 See the ghostly Sinners land,  
 And range along, a mournful Band!  
 Now they wish the task to try,  
 But Fate's decrees the boon deny,  
 And hold them there in long suspense †,  
 Ere the corrective rites commence.  
 In dread vacuity they pine,  
 'Twixt mortal joys and bliss divine,  
 'Till fann'd by Grace, the Spirit wakes,  
 And its heav'n-ward tenour takes.

\* See PURGATORIO, Cantos ii, iii.

† Id. Canto iii. to viii. and Cantos xvii, xviii.

Others, that hop'd in torpid ease,  
 To gain the Prize of endless Peace,  
 Starting at Affliction's rod,  
 And waken'd by the call of God,  
 Feel the fiery-winged dart  
 Of Conscience probe their callous heart;  
 Till, rousing at the frequent sting,  
 The active Virtues spread the wing,  
 And urge them on to join the Crew,  
 That Charity's behests pursue.  
 OTHERS \*, by Sin's enormous load,  
     Feel their fiery essence prefs'd,  
 And found'ring on the stony road,  
     Ceaseless toil, nor dare to rest.  
 That weight of earth that seem'd so light  
     When this sublunar vale they trod,  
 Now bends them low, in wretched plight,  
     Prefs'd downwards by the hand of God;  
     Till now, of all their foster'd joys bereft, [left:  
 They learn to prize the good, which late in scorn they  
     While prone, and humbled in the dust,  
     Those deplore their feeble trust,  
     And mourn their loss, involv'd in Night;  
     Others †, with redundant light,  
     Are punish'd as they go,  
     And view the figur'd show  
 Of virtuous deeds, examples high  
 Trac'd by the Artists of the Sky  
     Upon the sculptur'd wall,

\* See PURGATORIO, Cantos x. and xix.

† Idem, Canto xv.

And feel the sting of inward shame,  
Piercing deep their tortur'd frame;  
For there, with adamant frown,  
Appear the Sons of old Renown.

While, in the fairy hall \*,  
Ascend the Spectres of the Dead,  
And seem again the mundane Stage to tread,  
Showing, in images of air,  
Bright Virtue's fav'rite deeds in many a pageant fair.  
In vain the Sinners turn their eyes away,  
Still the dread contrast swims before their visual ray.

And oft from airy lungs they hear  
Sharp reproofs, that pierce the ear,  
And thrill the inmost soul

With Censure's dread control.

OTHERS in Cimmerian gloom †,  
Forlorn and blind, each to himself a tomb,  
Their own detested spectres haunt,  
And with Gorgonian terrors daunt,  
While some the fester'd Snake behold ‡,  
(Whose burnish'd scales, bedropp'd with gold,  
Late they admir'd, nor found the latent sting,)  
Now mounted high on fiery wing,  
And round the stony verge pursuing  
Their steps; while from the rocky ruin  
They stretch their arms, and long in vain  
To cool them in the distant main.

\* See PURGATORIO, Cantos xiv. and xv.

† Idem, Cantos xiii. and xvi.

‡ Idem, Cantos xxiv. and xxv.

Thus in successive toils they wind their way,  
To the bright confines of eternal \* Day,

And now the trump of † Jubilee

The note of Ransom breathes,  
And her regen'rate Family

Glad Earth to Heav'n bequeaths,  
Open'd by archangelic hands,  
The Temple of the Blest expands :  
Her lower courts, with silver light  
Sweet Phœbe vests ! her golden roof  
The Sun adorns, and views aloof

His own reflected light.

Around his throne the Planets bend their course,  
And each from him imbibes its energetic force,

But down to Earth, a purer beam,  
From the wide dome converging round,

On her dark face is seen to stream,  
And lightens all her fullen bound ;  
While sweet aerial Music sings  
Deep anthems of mysterious things,  
Soon from THAT distinguish'd Sphere,  
To meet the eye and charm the ear ;  
And many a tale the Chorus tells  
Of Spirits, in terrestrial cells  
Confin'd, beneath to Tyrants yoke,  
'Till stronger hands the bondage broke,

\* In the Preliminary Discourse to the Purgatorio, some arguments are assigned, which induced the Translator to suppose, that this part of the Poem was meant as an allegorical representation of the moral discipline to which Mankind are subjected in *this Life*.

† See the PARADISO, Canto i. &c.

And sent those Exiles of the Sky  
 Again their upward flight to try.  
 And see! in living clouds they come,  
 And round its ample precincts roam,  
     By heav'n-sent instinct led,  
     True Bliss to follow still,  
 From clime to clime, from zone to zone,  
     To the supernal Throne,  
 Led by the renovated will;  
 Like Scythia's Tribes\*, that chase the solar ray  
 To Cancer's bounds, and where he southward goes,  
 Thro' stages green pursue the wheels of Day,  
     And wait returning Spring in soft repose.  
 Thus they: nor long they wait,  
 For now their high-distinguish'd fate  
 Is fix'd beyond the pow'r of Chance or Change;  
     And as the circles of the Blest they range,  
 There each again his Guardian Genius meets,  
 And with rapt eye the holy Vision greets;  
     Which oft by lonely streams  
     Inspir'd their sacred dreams,  
     And round the pillow'd head  
     Elysian transports shed:  
     Or to the Spirit, lonely musing,  
     Heav'n-aspiring, Earth refusing;  
     When the Pilgrim chanc'd to rove  
     Thro' woodland scenes, by moonlight pale,  
     Thro' the deep bosom of the grove,  
     Along the Vista seem'd to sail,

\* See St. Pierre's *Studies of Nature*, Study 12th.

Prompting the holy thought with viewless spell,  
 When the dumb transport seem'd the heart to swell,  
 Those, when the Tempter's art assail'd,  
 Upheld them when their virtue fail'd.  
 Now on the pictur'd walls of Glory,  
 Each shows his Pupil's wond'rous story,  
 The conflicts which he pass'd beneath,  
 And the long triumphs of the Faith.  
 But now, a new Procession, from on high  
 Descending, fills the Temple's awful round.  
 With inexpressive raptures now they spy,  
 The WOND'ROUS MAN, who broke the dreary mound,  
 And led their legions from the Gorge profound  
 Of Hades, where in durance long they lay :  
 At his approach the silver trumpets found  
 A loftier note, and op'ning valves display  
 Scenes far surpassing thought, disclos'd in brighter Day.

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OF THE

MOST REMARKABLE CHARACTERS, &c.  
EXHIBITED IN THE POEM.

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☞ The Numerals refer to the Canto, and the Figures to the Stanza.

INF. signifies the INFERNO.

PURG. the PURGATORIO.

PAR. the PARADISO.

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☞ *The Author hopes that his Distance from the Press, will be allowed by his indulgent Readers, as an Excuse for the following*

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| 146.  | 11. for cheered <i>r.</i> cheated          | 13. <i>r.</i> fights,                     |                                           |
| 151.  | 7. for art <i>r.</i> air                   | { <i>dele</i> inverted commas at the      |                                           |
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